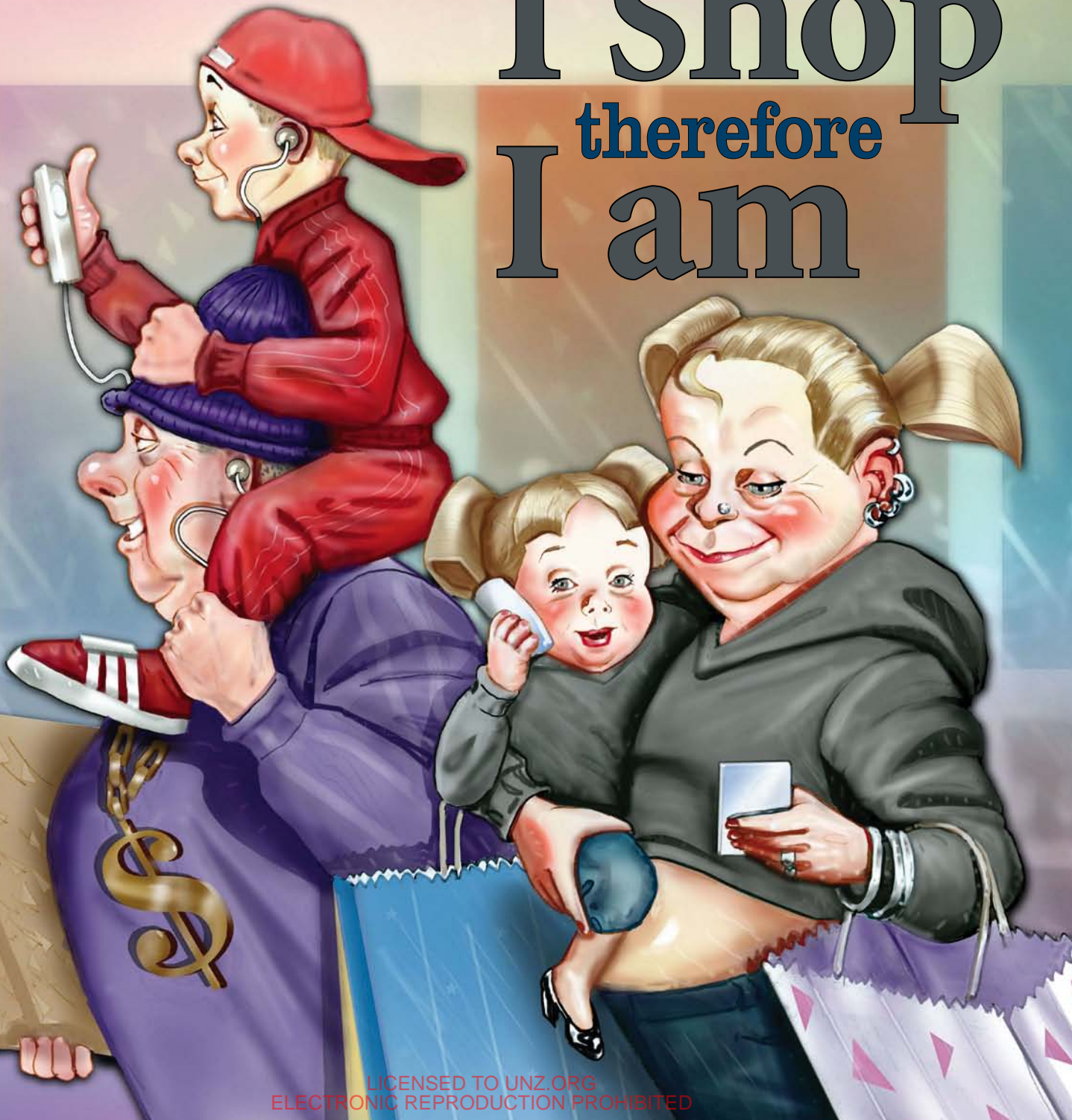


MAY 7, 2007

The American Conservative

I Shop
therefore
I am



HAGEL'S PEACE PLAN

Having read many speeches and watched many television appearances by Sen. Chuck Hagel, I disagree with James Pinkerton's characterization that the senator's foreign policy would be Bush "lite" (April 9). Senator Hagel has a deeper understanding, not only militarily, of the necessity of an internationalist foreign policy. His rejection of Bush's unilateralism and preemptive wars is commendable. His willingness to talk to America's "manufactured" enemies and his respect for Islam and Muslims is an enormous asset and welcome change from the neocon-driven Bush policies that identify Israel's enemies as America's.

Hagel has spoken of the need to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as the foundation for peace and suppression of terrorism and a prerequisite for democracy in the region. Hagel's priority will be America's national interests. His foreign-policy expertise, intelligence, sound judgment, courage, and humility deserve support.

MOHAMED KHODR
Winchester, Va.

THE REAL DEAL

After a 48-year absence, I recently visited the Marine boot camp at Parris Island and lunched with five recruits. To date, their favorite training activity was fighting with pugil sticks. (A pugil stick is a stick padded on both ends. Each recruit is outfitted with a football helmet and a pugil stick, and they try to beat the hell out of one another.)

We are not talking Blue Angels here. Combat at the infantry level is a street-fight. And in Korea, Vietnam, and Iraq, it is the infantryman, the streetfighter with a rifle, who has done, and continues to do, all the heavy lifting.

Only one man in Washington understands the idiocy of the U.S. trying to win hearts and minds while we physically beat the Iraqi people into the ground. That man is Chuck Hagel. Everybody else is an imposter.

JACK O'ROURKE
Narragansett, R.I.

PAUL'S THE ONE

Huzzah for Martha Moyers's letter endorsing Texas Congressman Ron Paul for president in the Forum section of the April 9 issue of *TAC*. With the possible exception of Tom Tancredo, he truly is the only choice for Constitution-loving conservatives. Mitt is from Massachusetts, which is all I need to know about him not to vote for him (and I'm a Mormon). Giuliani is no conservative, and McCain appears to be suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder. A vote for any of these three would be a vote for the status quo—more big government and more nation-building.

We need a man of proven principle, and Ron Paul, if nothing else, has a track record of standing up for the Constitution. He does not just go along to get along. He calls them as he sees them. If *TAC* were to live up to its name, it would officially endorse Ron Paul for president. How about it?

REX WARD
via e-mail

ETERNAL RUSSIA

While Anatol Lieven made many excellent observations in his 1993 book *The Baltic Revolution*, his March 26 article "To Russia with Realism" in *TAC* is too kind to the post-communist colossus. Although Dick Cheney is in no position to lecture anyone about democracy and freedom, this in no way justifies the recent Russian record on these matters.

The low level of trade between the U.S. and Russia did not cause the utterly disastrous free-market economic change in Russia. Trade relations are a two-way street. So are diplomatic relations. The incessant and ill-informed propaganda barrage about various rights violations in the Baltic states continues from Russia without let up. Border adjustments with Estonia remain uncertified to this date, and occupation continues to be called liberation by Russia.

"The Soviet Union—not Russia—was the principal Cold War enemy"? The end

of communism did not change Russia. Communism was one convenient tool for boosting the Russian propensity for expansionism. And such a basic bent is still very much alive in the minds of many in that country today. A change in attitude must come from Russia.

VIKTOR MINNESTE
Chicago, Ill.

LOCKE IS KEY

David Gordon does a fine job of refuting Charles Fried's contention that property is solely a convention of the state (March 26). But I am puzzled why John Locke is not mentioned.

Locke contended that in a state of nature survival is the primary principle, and the use/ownership of property is necessary to it. For Locke, the state is created to protect the ownership of property from those who would take it by force. Since the right to property precedes the state, it cannot be a creation of the state. *QED*

DARREL LACHEL
La Mesa, Calif.

NONE, MAYBE, DON'T KNOW

I have three questions that your staff may be able to answer:

1. How many troops have been deployed to Iraq by our "reliable ally" Israel?

2. Am I anti-Semitic if I like Arabs?

3. Since the U.S., Israel, France, Britain, China, India, Pakistan, and North Korea (?) have nuclear weapons, what is the justification in denying them to any other nation?

Any information regarding the above would be greatly appreciated.

ELIZABETH B. LEE
Fowlerville, Mich.

The American Conservative welcomes letters to the editor. Submit by e-mail to letters@amconmag.com, by fax to 703-875-3350, or by mail to 1300 Wilson Blvd., Suite 120, Arlington, VA 22209. Please include your name, address, and phone number. We reserve the right to edit all correspondence for space and clarity.



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[MEMORIAM]

MOMENT OF SILENCE

Humans harbor an instinctual need to make sense of the senseless, as if tragedy will be diminished by explanation. So it was that in the wake of the Virginia Tech shootings—ruthless as they were random—partisans engaged in an unseemly scramble to make the massacre a political thing.

Liberals renewed the tired argument that guns are too easy to get. Apparently a hellbent soul driven to chain students inside his horror shop and execute 32 would be deterred by increased paperwork. Others speculated about the shooter's alienation, wondering whether a more inclusive society might have better tended his self-esteem.

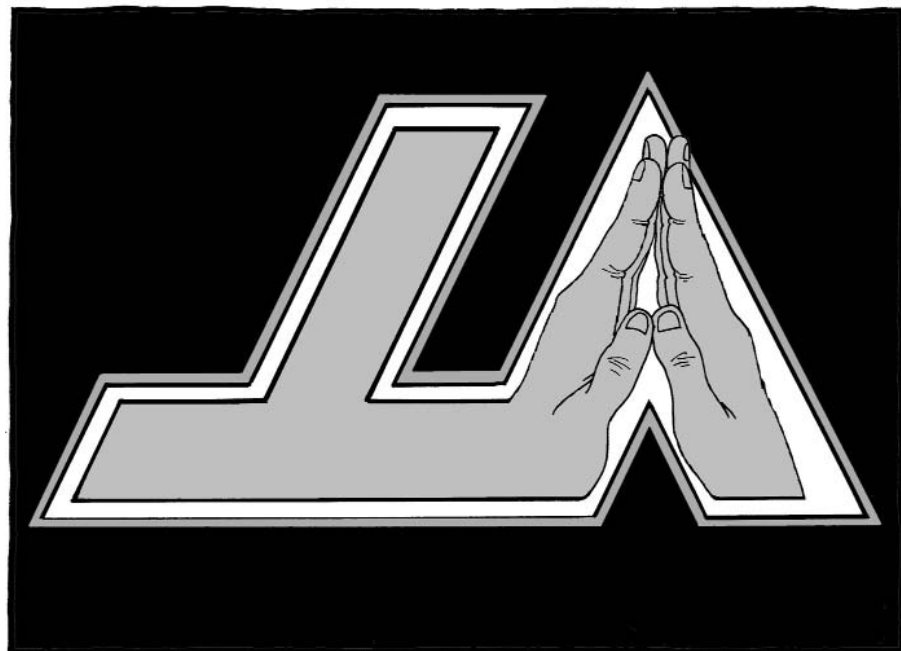
Conservatives, too, sought an object lesson, noting that like the Nigerian shooter at the Appalachian School of Law and the Jamaican-born D.C. sniper, Cho Seung-Hui was a violent import. There are better ways to make the case for immigration reform. The Virginia Tech student, whose parents run a dry-cleaning business, had lived in the U.S. since he was eight.

Evil stalks a fallen world. And much as it disappoints Washington—which in its infinite wisdom seeks to redeem the world one joint resolution at a time—ugliness can't be quarantined by federal initiatives. Better to bind up the broken-hearted than to score political points off their pain.

[MEDIA]

TALE OF TWO TEAMS

It's doubtful that any internal media story has approached the frenzy level of the Don Imus saga. The three-word insult he leveled at the Rutgers women's basketball team was of course undeserved and once widely broadcast robbed the young players of what could have been a sweet lifelong memory. Imus apologized sincerely, knowing he



BOB ENGLEHART WWW.CAGLEARTWORKS.COM

had done a bad thing, but his myriad of attackers had no intention of accepting the confession they demanded.

The Imus show has long been laced with ribald mimicry and insults—often mixed with insight. The vulgarism he used for the Rutgers team was the same he uses in referring to his wife, the “green ho.” That hardly excuses his depiction of the basketball players, but it likely shows that Imus was more interested in asserting his own coolness by flinging around hip-hop talk than in practicing racism.

Of course nothing could save his job once half the country commenced a status competition to assert its moral purity by denouncing the radio titan. That Al Sharpton, perpetrator of the Tawana Brawley hoax—for which he has never apologized—emerged as one of the judges in this contest is simply beyond parody.

Around that time, it came to light that another sports team had also been injured by powerful media figures—a group of young men every bit as innocent and undeserving of insult as the Rutgers women. But the Duke men's lacrosse team was not slighted by an over-the-top shock jock. It endured a year-long assault by rogue District Attor-

ney Michael Nifong, who ignored exculpatory evidence in order to push what he hoped would be a career-boosting prosecution. In the wake of the charges, the young men were vilified on their campus and subjected to a lynching atmosphere egged on by much of the press.

The Duke case raises deeper questions about race in America than anyone could plausibly wring from the Imus episode.

The nation's paper of record twisted itself in knots to excuse blatant prosecutorial misconduct; *New York Times* columnist Harvey Araton mocked the members of Duke's women's lacrosse team for proclaiming the innocence of their schoolmates. “Sanctimony by sweatband” Araton labeled the young women's protest, while hinting at the need for criminal investigation to find out “what do they know?”

But don't single out the *Times*; the *Washington Post* and *USA Today* were similarly reckless. The crime for which the three players were falsely accused—white men sexually assaulting a black woman—was apparently one that much of liberal America desperately wanted to believe in.

It has now been established that no rape or anything like one took place. DA

Nifong is subject to disbarment, if not worse. Don Imus has apologized, is still apologizing, to the young women whom he gratuitously insulted—as he should. But who is going to apologize to the Duke lacrosse players, who faced not three words of nastiness but had their lives turned upside down by a full year of defamation?

[WHITE HOUSE]

SCAPEGOAT WANTED

Looking for a career change? The White House is hiring a new war czar. Benefits include high-profile appearances on the Sunday talk shows, access to the president and Cabinet, “tasking authority” over the State and Defense Departments, and occasional rides on Air Force One. Responsibilities include sparing the president difficult questions, bumping up approval ratings, managing a sprawling bureaucracy at home and two wars abroad, and repeating the words “we’re making progress” until you are fired for incompetence. Compensation: you will never be able to hold public office again.

Surprising no one but the White House, Army Gen. Jack Keane and retired Air Force Gen. Joseph W. Ralston sent regrets. Former NATO Commander Gen. John J. Sheehan declined with the candor expected of a 35-year veteran of the Marine Corps: “The very fundamental issue is they don’t know where the hell they’re going.”

Thus the field is open, with National Security Adviser Stephen Hadley widening the search to civilian candidates—which seems only fair, since military experience never impressed the neocons anyway. Just bring a sword to fall on.

[EDUCATION]

JUST ASK DERSH

A reasonable person might conclude that nothing in academic life, and perhaps nothing at all, is beyond the

purview of Harvard law professor Alan Dershowitz. Hardly drawing breath from his campaign to discredit former President Jimmy Carter, Dershowitz has now involved himself in the tenure decisions of De Paul University in Chicago.

Norman Finklestein, whose criticism of Israel is as fierce as Dershowitz’s attachment to the country, is up for promotion in the political-science department. We offer no judgement on Finklestein’s qualifications except to note that his recent lectures in the country’s leading universities have been wildly popular and controversial and that the relevant De Paul tenure-review committees have been impressed and were in the process of recommending his promotion.

Then Dershowitz struck with a blizzard of e-mails, letters, and accusations. And bizarrely, De Paul seems to have stopped the process in its tracks.

We don’t know how this will end, but since the Harvard buttinski seems to believe everything in the world is his business, we may have to start seeking his views on unsolicited manuscripts sent to *TAC* for publication.

[CULTURE]

HUMAN ERROR

Apparently the grammar program built into Microsoft Word comes equipped with ideology. Not content to arbitrate split infinitives and misplaced modifiers, the virtual schoolmarm scanned our cover piece and spat out a political judgement. Our author wrote, “The logic carries all the way down to toddlers and perhaps even fetuses, who can be treated as shoppers in potentia.” Microsoft chided, “Use who or whom to refer to people. Use that or which to refer to anything non-human.” Unable to query the grinning icon about its nettlesome non-human designation, we politely declined the advice and proudly acknowledge our “error.” ■

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The Good Neocon

In writing a book on the new era America is entering after the Iraqi debacle, I revisited the various contributions to a post-Cold War symposium organized by

Owen Harries of *The National Interest*.

Then, before the crack-up of conservatism, the most respected foreign-policy voice of neoconservatism was that of Jeane Kirkpatrick. A Humphrey Democrat who had moved rightward since school days at Stephens and Barnard, Kirkpatrick had been Reagan's ambassador to the UN. The Gipper was deeply fond of her. At the Republican Convention of 1984, Jeane had coined two phrases that have lived on: "San Francisco Democrats" and "They always blame America first!"

Her essay, "A Normal Country in a Normal Time," was published in the fall 1990 issue of *TNI*. Jeane likely finished it after the Berlin Wall fell but before Saddam's August invasion of Kuwait.

Though her specialty was foreign policy, she began by declaring, "America's purposes are mainly domestic."

"A good society is defined not by its foreign policy but by its internal qualities. ... Foreign policy becomes a major aspect of a society only if its government is expansionist, imperial, aggressive, or when it is threatened by aggression. One of the most important consequences of the half century of war and Cold War has been to give foreign affairs an unnatural importance."

Kirkpatrick believed that foreign policy must now take a backseat: "The end of the Cold War frees time, attention and resources to American ends."

In a frontal assault on today's neoconservative dogmas about America having an historic mission to democratize mankind, Jeane noted that the only men-

tion of foreign policy in the preamble to the Constitution is "provide for the common defense."

"There is no mystical American 'mission,' or purpose to be 'found' independently of the U.S. Constitution. ... There is no inherent or historical 'imperative' for the U.S. government to seek to achieve any other goal—however great—except as it is mandated by the Constitution or adopted by the people through elected officials."

Bush's doctrine of "world democratic revolution" and "ending tyranny on earth," as it has not been ratified by an elected Congress, is without constitutional sanction. When Bush goes, it goes.

In those days, Charles Krauthammer was already burling on about surrendering U.S. sovereignty to merge with Europe and Japan in a "super-sovereign" entity that would be "hegemonic in the world." Jeane brought him up short: "[I]t is not America's purpose to establish 'universal dominance'... not even the universal dominance of democracy. ... It is not within the United States' power to democratize the world."

Beware of elites who behave like some priestly class that alone has the knowledge, experience, and wisdom to guide foreign policy, she warned. "It has become more important than ever that the experts who conduct foreign policy on our behalf be subject to the direction and control of the people."

Beware, too, of an "internationalism" that "looks at the world and asks what needs to be done—with little explicit concern for the national interest."

America "should assume no new obligations in remote places," she admonished. The United States "should negotiate rules which give U.S. products fair access to foreign markets and give foreign businesses no better than fair access to U.S. markets ... to ensure that the patterns of trade competition do not undermine the United States' technological and industrial base."

"This is a government responsibility which cannot be ignored because of anxieties about an 'industrial' policy."

Kirkpatrick was no *Wall Street Journal* free-trade fundamentalist. She was an economic nationalist.

As for the U.S. role in NATO, she wrote, "Neither can the U.S. be expected to sustain an expensive role in an alliance whose chief role is to diminish European fear of a resurgent Germany."

"We should not spend American money protecting an affluent Japan ..."

"Most of the international military obligations that we assumed were once important are now outdated. ... It is time to give up the dubious benefits of superpower status and become again an usually successful, open American republic." A republic, not an empire, the lady said.

In closing, she wrote, "The United States preformed heroically in a time when heroism was required; altruistically during the long years when freedom was endangered."

"The time when America should bear such unusual burdens is past. With the return of 'normal' times we can again become a normal nation."

Had Bush II heeded her wise counsel, America would not be in the hellish mess it is in today. Jeane Kirkpatrick died in December at 80 years of age. *Requiescat in pace.* ■

[a nation of shoppers]

Spent Youth

The global marketplace aims to create a world of adolescents: children with consumer power and adults with the appetites of spoiled kids.

By Benjamin R. Barber

IN THESE PALTRY TIMES of capitalism's triumph, as we slide into consumer narcissism, Shakespeare's seven ages of man are in danger of being washed away by lifelong puerility. Pop-cultural journalists depict a new species of perennial adolescent—*kidults*, *rejuveniles*, *twixters*, *adultescents*. They are discerning the consequence of a powerful new cultural ethos of induced childishness, an infantilization that is closely tied to the demands of consumer capitalism in a global market economy.

In an epoch when fear of *jihad* is as prevalent as the infringement on liberties to which fear gives rise, it may seem self-indulgent to fret about the dangers of hyperconsumerism. When poor children in the developing world are being starved, prostituted, and impressed into military service, anxiety about the prosperous young in the developed world who may be growing up into consumers too fast, or about adult consumers being dumbed down, can seem solipsistic.

Yet as James Madison said long ago, the pathologies of liberty can be as perilous as the pathologies of tyranny—and far more difficult to discern or remedy. The diseases of prosperity that are the afflictions of capitalism do not kill outright. They violate no explicit laws. Yet capitalism's success breeds new and dangerous challenges.

Once upon a time, capitalism was allied with virtues that contributed at least marginally to democracy, responsibility, and citizenship. Today it is allied with vices that—although they serve consumerism—undermine democracy, responsibility, and citizenship. The question is not whether there is an alternative to markets but whether markets can be made to meet the real needs capitalism is designed to serve, whether not just democracy but capitalism itself can survive the infantilist ethos upon which it has come to depend. Either capitalism will regain its capacity to promote equality as well as profit, diversity as well as consumption, or infantilization will undo not only democracy but capitalism itself.

Infantilization is at once an elusive and a confrontational term, a potent metaphor that points on one hand to the dumbing down of goods and shoppers in a global economy that seems to produce more goods than people need and that points, on the other hand, to the targeting of children as consumers in a market where there are never enough shoppers.

On the potency of adolescent culture, liberals and conservatives agree. Writes Robert J. Samuelson: "We live in an age when people increasingly refuse to act their age. The young (or many of them)

yearn to be older, while the older (or many of them) yearn to be younger. We have progressively demolished the life cycle's traditional stages, shortening childhood and following it with a few murky passages. Adolescence begins before puberty and, for some, lasts forever..." Samuelson is echoed by Joseph Epstein: "The whole sweep of advertising, which is to say of market, culture since soon after World War II has been continuously to lower the criteria of youthfulness while extending the possibility for seeming youthful to older and older people." Little surprise then that magazines such as *Time* ("They Just Won't Grow Up") and *New York* ("Forever Youngish: Why Nobody Wants to Be an Adult Anymore") worry in major cover articles about America's Peter Pan tendencies.

There is anecdotal evidence everywhere: airport police handing out lollipops to placate irate passengers; television news divisions turned over to entertainment executives; the *New York Times Magazine* urging thongs on seven-year-olds; the professionalization of high-school sports that turns teen basketball courts into NBA recruiting turf and basketball-player bodies into advertising billboards; adult readers flocking to Harry Potter; fast-food franchises girdling the world to exploit

children's restless aversion to sit-down dining; teen guy games such as *World of Warcraft*, *Grand Theft Auto*, and *Narc* and comic-book films such as "Terminator," "Spider-Man," and "Shrek" dominating the entertainment market; cosmetic surgery and sexual performance drugs becoming staples of boomers trying to smuggle atavistic youth into the age of Social Security; businessmen in baseball caps mimicking the studied sloppiness of their kids.

TODAY CONSUMERIST CAPITALISM PROFITS ONLY WHEN IT CAN ADDRESS THOSE WHOSE ESSENTIAL NEEDS HAVE ALREADY BEEN SATISFIED BUT WHO HAVE THE MEANS TO ASSUAGE INVENTED NEEDS.

Beyond pop culture, the infantalist ethos also dominates as the marks of perpetual childishness are grafted onto adults who indulge in puerility without pleasure and indolence without innocence. Hence, the new consumer penchant for age without dignity, dress without formality, sex without reproduction, work without discipline, play without spontaneity, acquisition without purpose, certainty without doubt, life without responsibility, and narcissism into old age and unto death without a hint of wisdom or humility. Civilization is not an ideal or an aspiration, it is a video game.

These anecdotes tell a story, but infantilization—not second childhood but enduring childishness—is more than a mesmeric metaphor. A new cultural ethos is being forged. Marketers and merchandisers are self-consciously chasing a youthful commercial constituency sufficiently padded in its pocketbook to be an attractive market yet sufficiently unformed in its tastes as to be vulnerable to corporate manipulation. At the same time, these avatars of consumer capitalism are seeking to

encourage adult regression, hoping to rekindle in grown-ups the tastes and habits of children so that they can sell the useless cornucopia of games and gadgets for which there is no discernible "need market" other than the one created by capitalism's frantic imperative to sell.

As the population in the developed world ages, the definition of youth simply moves up. *The Economist* summed it up in its millennium special

report: "Once, when you grew up you put away childish things. Today, the 35-year-old Wall Street analyst who zips to work on his push-scooter, listening to Moby on his headphones and carrying annual reports in his backpack, has far more in common with a 20-year-old than he would have done a generation ago." A physicians' organization called the Society for Adolescent Medicine reports on its website that it is concerned with people 10 to 26 years old, while the MacArthur Foundation's "Transitions to Adulthood" project puts the transition's end at 34 years old.

The irony is that Americans are actually getting older, the median age having moved from 25 in the baby boomer high-water year of 1960 to 35 in 2000; by 2050 there will be more in their seventies than in their teens. Only in the Third World and in the Third World immigrant communities of the First World is the majority constituted by the young, although they often lack the means to express their puerility in consumption.

In capitalism's more creative and successful period, a productivist capitalism prospered by meeting the real needs of

real people. Creating a synergy between making money and helping others—the Puritan Protestant formula for entrepreneurial virtue—producers profited by making commodities for the workers they employed, a circle of virtue that benefited both classes and society at large. Today consumerist capitalism profits only when it can address those whose essential needs have already been satisfied but who have the means to assuage invented needs.

In this new epoch in which the needy are without income and the well heeled are without needs, radical inequality is simply assumed. The United States and Canada, with just over 5 percent of the world's population, control almost one-third of the world's private consumption expenditures. Western Europe, with 6.4 percent of the population, controls almost 29 percent of expenditures. That means 11.5 percent of the world's population controls 60 percent of the world's consumer spending. On the other hand, sub-Saharan Africa, with nearly 11 percent of the population, controls only 1.2 percent of consumer expenditures.

Inequality leaves capitalism with a dilemma: the overproducing capitalist market must either grow or expire. If the poor cannot be enriched enough to become consumers, then grown-ups in the First World, with vast disposable income but few needs, will have to be enticed into shopping. The founder of Filene's department store, on a visit to Paris back in 1935, grasped even then that (in Victoria de Grazia's description) "the chief economic problem facing the industrial world was to distribute goods in accordance with the now patently inexhaustible capacity to produce them. Not the overproduction of merchandise, but its nondistribution was the problem. From the point of view of businesspeople, they were not producing too much, consumers were buying too little." Inducing consumers to remain childish

and impetuous in their taste helps ensure that they will buy the global goods designed for indolent and prosperous youth.

I am not reading the notion of infantilization into what the market is doing in order to illuminate its practices in an era of mandatory selling; I am extrapolating out of the actual practices the idea of manufacturing needs and encouraging infantilization. I am not suggesting in the passive voice that there “is a process of infantilization underway.” I am arguing that many of our primary business, educational, and governmental institutions are purposefully engaged in infantilization. For this is how we maintain a system of consumerist capitalism no longer supported by the traditional market forces of supply and demand.

Merchandizing advocates like Gene Del Vecchio tell clients that capitalism is under siege and that to sell in the global marketplace where “the demand for adult goods and services has proven not to be endless,” and where there is little profit in selling to those in need, manufacturers must not only create homogeneous global products aimed at the wealthy young, but must embark on what Norma Pecora calls “consumerization of the child.” According to Del Vecchio, the new capitalism must spark a “kidquake of kid-directed goods and services” aimed at children old enough “to articulate their preferences hence, children ages four and older.” The advertising industry in the United States alone spent over \$230 billion in 2001, with as much as \$40 billion aimed at children.

No one has identified what is happening with greater lucidity than Boston College cultural critic Juliet B. Schor: “The United States,” she writes, “is the most consumer-oriented society in the world ... [and] the architects of this culture ... have now set their sights on children.... Kids and teens are now the epicenter of American consumer culture.

They command the attention, creativity, and dollars of advertisers. Their tastes drive market trends.” Thus consumerism urges us to retrieve the childish things the Bible told us we had to put away and enter a modern digital playground for adults who, the market seems to have concluded, no longer need to grow up. Rather than employ schools to help children grow out of their toys, we import toys into the schools—video games and computers as “edutainment” teaching aids, as well as ad-sponsored TV in the classroom. Jenn Shreve comments, “[T]raditional teaching methods simply can’t compete with the appeal of a commercial world of games that makes children heroes or puts the fate of Harry Potter in their hands.”

In high-school classrooms, this commercialization is supported by outfits like Channel One Network that offer in-school soft “news” television complete with advertisements that sell at rates that rival the Super Bowl. In higher education, colleges and universities that once acted as a counterpoint to commercial culture have gone prostrate

More and more adults, according to critic Joseph Epstein, are “locked in a high school of the mind, eating dry cereal, watching a vast quantity of television, hoping to make sexual scores” and generally enjoying “perpetual adolescence, cut loose, free of responsibility, without the real pressures that life, that messy business, always exerts.” Norma Pecora adds, “with the consumerization of the child comes the ideological shaping of the adult. That is not to say we will all demand our *Lion King* as adults, though several recent commercials play on the child within, but we will come to expect life to play out in particular ways.” It is our expectations about how life plays out that the infantile ethos conditions.

That landscape’s contours can be reduced to three archetypal dualisms: easy over hard, simple over complex, and fast over slow.

The tensions between easy and hard have challenged every society, but ours is perhaps the first in which the adult institutions seem to be on the side of easy. Weight loss without exercise, marriage without commitment, internet

BUSH’S GLOBAL STRATEGY SHARES THE ETHOS OF EASY: WAR WITHOUT CONSCRIPTION, IDEALISM WITHOUT TAXATION, MORALITY WITHOUT SACRIFICE.

before corporate sponsors of research that administrators have neither the will nor the independent funding to oppose. College marketing specialist David Morrison sees students as “voracious consumers who use self-gratification to offset the rigors of academics and the stress of an uncertain future.” This ethos catalyzes a novel identity politics in which consumer branding rather than race, religion, and other forms of ascriptive identity along with voluntary civic and political identity comes to define who we are.

“college degrees” without course work, athletic success through steroids and showboating. In the realm of foreign policy, President Bush’s high-minded global strategy of liberty shares the ethos of easy, comprised by words without consequences: war without conscription, idealism without taxation, morality without sacrifice. An infantile dream-view of the world in which saying “I want it to be so” is enough to make it so, in which critic Slavoj Žižek has pointedly remarked, the consumer market offers products that make choice easy—

“products deprived of their malignant property: coffee without caffeine, cream without fat, beer without alcohol...”

As an entailment of its preference for easy over hard, the infantalist ethos also prefers the simple to the complex. Simplicity has a sweetness all its own, but adult civilizations are generally defined by their capacity to embrace nuance and complexity. This preference is evident in domains dominated by simple tastes—fast food and moronic movies, revved-up spectator sports and dumbed-down video games, all of which are linked into the nexus of consumer merchandising that the infantalist ethos nurtures and promotes.

In an acute *New Yorker* profile of the celebrated basketball player Shaquille O’Neal, Rebecca Mead describes how “American culture is increasingly geared to the tastes of teen-age boys” by showing how Shaq lives the life of an unformed teen, utterly secure in the “simplicity of his tastes.” When Shaq celebrated his 30th birthday party with a red carpet with Superman logos projected in spinning light in his living room and a cake with O’Neal depicted as Superman as the climax, he was acting out a role the corporation that employed him helped design and perfect.

The preference for easy over hard and simple over complex issues naturally in a preference of fast over slow. It has been 75 years since philosopher Bertrand Russell wrote *In Praise of Idleness*, and since that time “the pleasure of slowness,” Milan Kundera observed not long ago, “has disappeared.”

Fast translates into instantaneity, which writer James Gleick observes, “rules in the network and in our emotional lives: instant coffee, instant intimacy, instant replay,” and, bringing us back to what is perhaps infantilization’s greatest departure from the old Protestant ethos, instant gratification.

The pleasure principle, unadulterated, destroys the life it pleasures, grasping, seizing, and hurting at will. That is why civilizations, although they may prize aspects of childhood just as individuals do, will lean institutionally toward the disciplining of impulse. But now, for the first time in history, a society has felt its economic survival demands a kind of controlled regression, a culture that promotes puerility rather than maturation. The strategy does not represent a campaign to recognize those features of childhood that might be sources of virtue—innocence, authenticity, creativity, and playfulness. On the contrary, it is a campaign to repress those features of childhood in favor of others that makes adults vulnerable, manipulable, impulsive, irrational. This strategy makes good commercial sense since the market does not infantilize out of an ethical love for children but only out of an instrumental need to sell unnecessary goods to people whose adult judgment and tastes are obstacles.

Frozen in time, aging adults remain youth consumers throughout their lives, while toddlers and preteen “tweens” are converted into “adult” consumers as they come “on line” at an ever younger age. Thus capitalism in its late consumerist phase postpones its rendezvous with destiny and survives at least another generation or two.

Adult cultures are plural and distinctive. Youth culture is not only simplistic—it is remarkably universal. In the apt description of Chip Walker, “despite different cultures, middle-class youth all over the world seem to live their lives as if in a parallel universe. They get up in the morning, put on their Levi’s and Nikes, grab their caps, backpacks, and Sony personal CD players, and head for school.” There are French citizens and Ibo tribesmen and Iraqi Sunnis, but kids are kids. If their countries and tribes and

religions can be made to appear as secondary to their global market tastes and youthbranded appetites as children, capitalism need not be impeded by pluralism. A global consumer economy in a world of differentiated cultures depends on the ability to sell uniform goods. According to Naomi Klein, the question is “What is the best way to sell identical products across multiple borders? What voice should advertisers use to address the whole world at once? How can one company accommodate cultural difference while still remaining internally coherent?” The business guru James U. McNeal, who has written what admirers call the “bible for all children’s marketers,” has a compelling answer:

[C]hildren are very much alike around the industrialized world. They love to play... they love to snack ... and they love being children with other children (in contrast to assuming most adult roles). The result is that they very much want the same things, that they generally translate their needs into similar wants that tend to transcend culture.

The starting point for McNeal’s logic, as well as Klein’s, is William Greider’s global market world of surplus production: too many goods chasing too few consumers in an era of diminishing consumer wants, at least among those with disposable income, in a global economy where customers with the means to buy are too diverse to desire the same goods. Quite simply, in a world of too many commodities and too few shoppers, children become valuable as consumers. And as a bonus, the client constituency grows as the children grow. As David Jones and Doris Klein wrote over 35 years ago, “the child wants what it wants when it wants it, without consideration of the needs of others, and man-child does not outgrow this pattern.”

The trouble faced by democratic society is not simply that it is deprived of the responsible grown-up citizens who are its legitimate custodians but that the ethic of infantilization perverts childhood as well, prompting us to treat children instrumentally—not as little beings to be serviced by capitalism but as themselves servants of capitalism. J.M. Barrie's fantasy of Peter Pan is neatly inverted. For Barrie, the dream was for kids never to grow up so that they might be spared the burdens of responsible adulthood.

IF **PATERNALISTIC STATES** CREATE TOP-DOWN FORMS OF INFANTILIZATION, MARKETS TODAY ARE CREATING **BOTTOM-UP FORMS**.

Modern merchandisers don't want Peter to grow up either—not to preserve his innocence, not to keep him safe but to make him their loyal customer, to exploit his separation from family to make him theirs, to prompt him to buy the fun for which youth once offered him costless access.

To the professional keepers of the infantilist ethos, whose task is nicely euphemized by Del Vecchio as "creating ever-cool," waging the war for the soul of Peter Pan means engaging in a great battle, a struggle to achieve what Thomas Frank calls "conquest of cool." This "will be won by the company that best understands kids, their emotional needs, their fantasies, their dreams, their desires. Such knowledge is the mightiest weapon in a marketer's arsenal to win a child's heart," Del Vecchio writes. Exit sensitive writers like Barrie and Lewis Carroll who capture children in literature to free the imagination. Enter those whose aim it is to capture children's imagination in order to indenture them to the marketplace: enter Super Mario Bros., Britney Spears, "American Idol." Kiddie consumerism dressed up as consumer cool. Peter Pan

incarcerated in what Mike Davis once called the "panoptican mall" in the "carceral city." Wendy watching the Home Shopping Network.

Del Vecchio's words manifest not merely an ethos of marketing, but politics made argumentative and simplistic; ideology focused on narcissism and interest; tele-religion and commercialized revivalism offering shallow solutions to deep problems—all deployed on behalf of a declining global economy unable to sell the poor what they need

but trying desperately to sell the prosperous what they don't need. Infantilization in this instrumentalist form signals the abandonment of Western civilization's understanding of childhood as a precious legacy and children—not yet capable of autonomy or self-defense—as ends in themselves, whose happiness and well-being are the ultimate object of public good. Thus our democracy is corrupted, our republican realm of public goods and citizens is gradually individualized, and the capitalist economy, once intended to serve democracy and the republican commonweal, is bent and soon likely to be broken.

It was once rather common for conservatives to pillory welfare statism for creating childlike dependency. Totalitarian states historically were thought to act as overweening authorities that infantilized their subjects to keep them in line. Yet if paternalistic states create top-down forms of infantilization, markets today are creating bottom-up forms—less visible because they arise from supposedly pluralistic and competitive markets that turn out to be coercive in intractable ways as they seek to inspire childlike dependency in consumers.

The logic carries all the way down to toddlers and perhaps even fetuses, who can be treated as shoppers in potentia. According to the Center for a New American Dream, "babies as young as six months of age can form mental images of corporate logos and mascots," which means "brand loyalties can be established as early as age two." It follows that "by the time children head off to school most can recognize hundreds of brand logos." Kids' marketer James McNeal splits the difference, identifying the ideal "kid customer" as "a confident little 9 year old with a cute little nose and arms full of shopping bags, emerging from a department store ... confident, a big spender, able to cope in the market place." After all, "kids are the most unsophisticated of all consumers. They have the least and therefore want the most. Consequently, they are in a perfect position to be taken."

It takes more than mere marketing to score a hit on targeted children, however. It requires that the target be separated from its protective environment: that it be uprooted from the homes and habits that protect it. Wendy and her brothers, seduced by Peter Pan, flew from home to escape the grown-ups who were fixed on seeing them all grow up. Liberation now means establishing children's boutiques and Disney and Warner Brothers stores as adult-free zones. It means arranging mall space so that teen and youth shops are on different floors so that the young will shop separately from their parents.

Children in earlier totalitarian societies were stripped of familial loyalties and made to serve the party in the name of liberty from "untrustworthy" and "unpatriotic" parents—"Turn your parents in if they are disloyal to the Party!" Today children's gatekeepers are pushed out of the way in the name of "empowerment"—the need to make children "autonomous" consumers.

These are not philosophical abstractions drawn from the old Left cultural critique of capitalism that must be read into the marketplace. It is what marketplace vendors acknowledge, even boast, they are doing. In business lingo, this individuation of choice is “market segmentation,” which, Pecora writes, is portrayed as “consistent with a shift in general consumer patterns from family needs and wants to individual consumption.” The child embedded in a family community makes a poor shopper. But the child liberated through marketing to become a four-year-old “individual” becomes an apt consumer capable even of being an “influencer” over income dispensed by subordinate parents. But in truth, autonomy leaves it vulnerable, unprotected, and susceptible to manipulation.

The misuse of terms like “autonomy” and “empowerment” to rationalize selling to children far too young to possess either liberty or judgment (the two key components of self-determining power) is typical of an infantilist ethos that reinforces consumer market ideology by providing corporate predators with an altruistic ethic to rationalize selfish ends. Genuine empowerment always treats the person as an end in herself and is defined by the domain of education, not advertising. It is measured by increased capacity to resist manipulation, not increased vulnerability to it. Hence infantilization is empowerment’s antonym.

The cultural pathology of late consumer capitalism effectively prioritizes consumerism at the expense of capitalism’s traditional balance between production and consumption, work and leisure, and investment and spending. This behavior turns out to be remarkably unaccommodating to civilizing tendencies. It mimics infantile aggressiveness in striking ways. The consumer at once both imbibes the world of products and so conquers it and yet is

defined via brands, trademarks, and consumer identity. She trumpets her freedom even as she is locked in the cage of private desire and unrestrained libido. She announces a faux consumer power even as she renounces her real citizen power. The boundary separating her from what she buys vanishes. She becomes the goods she buys—a Calvin Klein torrid teen or a politically conscious Benetton rebel or a Crate & Barrel urban homesteader or a plasma television Nike spectator “athlete.”

In thinking he has conquered the world of things, the consumer is in fact consumed by them. In trying to enlarge himself, he vanishes. His so-called freedom evaporates even as it is named, for it seals off the public consequences of private choices. The gloating Hummer owner may preen with macho pride, unaware or uncaring that he drives a behemoth that makes the U.S. dependent on foreign oil resources, contributing quite inadvertently to the justification for military interventions he otherwise opposes.

The hidden social costs of consumer preferences are notated neither in the consciousness of consumers nor the statistical indices of the U.S. Treasury Department. The consumer is radically individuated rather than socially embedded and less rather than more free as a consequence. He is permitted to choose from a menu of options offered by the world but not to alter or improve the menu or the world. In this, the dynamics of consumption actually render the individual more rather than less vulnerable to control. The full-time consumer as imagined by the aggressive marketing executive ideally acts regressively, more like an impulsive child than an adult.

The citizen, on the other hand, is an adult, a public chooser empowered by social freedom to effect the environment of choice and the agendas by which choices are determined and por-

trayed; the infantilized consumer is the private chooser, whose power to participate in communities or effect change is diminished and whose public judgment is attenuated. The infantilist ethos, then, does the necessary work of consumer capitalism but at the expense of the civilization that productivist capitalism helped create.

Capitalism has come full circle. Originating in an extraordinary synergy between selfishness and altruism, profit and productivity, it once allowed energetic risk takers to prosper by serving the growth and welfare of emerging nations. It did so with the succor of a Protestant ethos that lent moral weight to hard work, far-sighted investment, and ascetic self-denial—the very qualities productivist capitalism needed to thrive. Today its productive capacity has outrun the needs it once served even as its distributive capacity has been stymied by the growing global inequalities it has catalyzed. Depending for its success on consumerism rather than productivity, it has generated an ethos of infantilization that prizes the very attributes the Protestant ethos condemned. It seems quite literally to be consuming itself, leaving democracy in peril and the fate of citizens uncertain. Although it affects to prize and enhance liberty, it leaves liberty’s meaning ambiguous in an epoch where shopping seems to have become a more persuasive marker of freedom than voting, and where what we do alone in the mall counts more than what we do together in the public square. ■

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AIPAC on Trial

The lobby argues that good Americans spy for Israel.

By Justin Raimondo

IS THERE A First Amendment right to engage in espionage? Dorothy Rabinowitz seems to think so. Describing the actions of Steve Rosen and Keith Weissman, two former top officials of AIPAC, the premier Israel lobbying group, who passed purloined intelligence to Israeli government officials, the Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist characterized them as “activities that go on every day in Washington, and that are clearly protected under the First Amendment.” If what Rabinowitz says is true—if passing classified information to foreign officials is routine in the nation’s capital—then we are all in big trouble.

On Aug. 4, 2005, Rosen, Weissman, and Pentagon analyst Larry Franklin were indicted by a federal grand jury and charged with violating provisions of the Espionage Act that forbid divulging national defense information to persons not authorized to receive it. The indictment traces the treasonous trio’s circuitous path as they met in the shadows—in empty restaurants, at Union Station in Washington, on street corners. Rosen and Weissman sought out and cultivated Franklin, milking him for information that they dutifully transmitted to their Israeli handlers. According to Rabinowitz, however, they were merely “doing what they had every reason to view as their jobs”—which is true, assuming they understood their jobs to be spying for Israel.

The trial is scheduled to begin June 7. As the day of reckoning approaches, the Israel lobby is ratcheting up the rhetoric. So, too, is the defense: in a duet of hysterical accusations and frenzied rationaliza-

tions, the accused spies’ defenders have described the proceedings as a frame-up, the result of an intra-bureaucratic struggle within the government, and a plot by anti-Semites in Bush’s Justice Department to carry out a Washington pogrom. None of these flights of imagination are any more convincing than the Dream Team’s defense of O.J. Simpson. Yet the noise level continues to rise, as if sheer volume, instead of logical arguments, could overwhelm the copious evidence of the defendants’ guilt.

The indictment lists numerous acts of espionage, dating back to 1999, in which Rosen and/or Weissman acted as conduits for classified information flowing from Washington to Tel Aviv. The feds had been watching for a long time: the indictment makes clear that Rosen and Weissman didn’t make a move without the FBI’s counterintelligence unit knowing about it. This surveillance is how they happened on Larry Franklin, the Pentagon’s top Iran analyst, who walked in on a luncheon meeting in Arlington, Virginia, attended by Rosen, Weissman, and Naor Gilon, chief of the political-affairs section at the Israeli Embassy. The feds were listening in as Franklin—referring to a document dated June 25 and marked “top secret”—announced he had secrets to tell.

Tell not sell: unlike the majority of post-Cold War spies, the AIPAC-Franklin espionage ring wasn’t centered around financial gain but ideology. Franklin is a dedicated neoconservative, a minor yet key player in the neocon network, who served in the military attache’s office in the U.S. Embassy in Tel Aviv in the late 1990s and was a

Defense Intelligence Agency analyst with expertise in Iranian affairs working in Douglas Feith’s policy shop.

The counter-intelligence unit was hot on Franklin’s trail, and they watched his every move—his wholesale transfer of top-secret information on Iran, al-Qaeda, and other intelligence of interest to Israel to Rosen and Weissman, who funneled it to their contacts in the Israeli Embassy. The FBI gave Franklin enough rope to hang himself, and then moved in, showing up at his door and confronting him with his treachery. A search of his home and office turned up a veritable lending library of classified documents dating back years, all of which had doubtless been made available to the Israelis. Faced with the probability of a long prison stretch, Franklin agreed to wear a wire to his subsequent meetings with Rosen and Weissman. In the months that followed, the FBI built its case, recording conversations and following the AIPAC duo.

And they did a good job, apparently, because the government is making an unusual request: that some testimony and evidence be shielded from the public due to its highly sensitive nature. This wasn’t just a case of pilfering a few innocuous memoranda. It looks like team AIPAC made off with the family jewels and maybe even the deed to the house. Why else would the Justice Department risk having a conviction thrown out on appeal on account of such a rarely invoked legal mechanism?

The defense has protested proposed security procedures—magnetometers at the courtroom door, security sweeps of the courtroom itself, an officer of the

court monitoring electronic surveillance while the trial is in session—on the grounds they would prejudice the jury against the defendants. They compare this to dragging Rosen and Weissman before the jury in prisoners' uniforms and shackles. Yet these security measures point to the seriousness of the matter before the court, the depth to which the Rosen-Weissman-Franklin spy ring penetrated the government, and the ongoing breach they have opened in America's national-security firewall.

While most of the more cautious elements in the Jewish community are staying well away from this case, the radicals, such as Rabbi Avi Weiss and his AMCHA-Coalition for Jewish Concerns, who have previously devoted their efforts to freeing Jonathan Pollard, have now turned their attention to Rosen and Weissman. Steven Lieberman and Anne Sterba, lawyers for the group, wrote in an amicus brief: "Trying these two men for disclosing critical 'national defense information' to foreign officials, without letting the public know what the alleged information was, will allow enemies of the Jewish people to exaggerate the significance of that evidence and will leave the press and the public to subsist only on rumors and speculation."

The Weiss group likens the prosecution of Rosen and Weissman to the Dreyfus case—in effect positing the existence of a vast anti-Semitic conspiracy at the highest levels of the Justice Department. Not exactly a credible contention, offered, as it is, without evidence, but the defenders of Rosen and Weissman are getting more frantic as the trial date approaches. As a writer for the Israeli newspaper *Ha'aretz* put it, "Does this trial really carry any resemblance to the Dreyfus trial? It's a different era, a different country, a different system, a different accusation. Making this comparison demands some imagination, much ambition, and maybe a speck of chutzpah too."

A recently unsealed defense memorandum details a Feb. 16, 2005 colloquy between Rosen's lawyer, Abbe Lowell, and Nathan Lewin, AIPAC's legal counsel, in which the latter reveals that Paul McNulty—then the U.S. attorney for the eastern district of Virginia and chief prosecutor in the case—"would like to end it with minimal damage to AIPAC." Lewin told Lowell, "He is fighting with the FBI to limit the investigation to Steve Rosen and Keith Weissman and to avoid expanding it." This is hardly the behavior one would expect of contemporary anti-Dreyfusards in the Justice Department plotting to scapegoat AIPAC and the Jews.

Clearly the Rosen-Weissman defense team is involved in a bit of "greymail," that is, forcing the government to disclose as much classified information as possible during the discovery phase of this case and hoping to derail the prosecution entirely as it weighs the effects of disclosure against the benefits of a possible conviction. As we go to press, Judge T.S. Ellis has ruled against the prosecution's proposal to shield sensitive testimony and evidence behind a veil of pseudonyms and euphemism, which could delay the beginning of the trial.

Efforts to embarrass the administration go beyond accusing DOJ and extend to prominent figures such as Condoleezza Rice, who is accused by Abbe Lowell of leaking national defense information to AIPAC as Franklin did. Gen. Anthony Zinni is being targeted in a similar manner. Both have been subpoenaed, along with David Satterfield, deputy chief of the U.S. mission to Iraq, and William Burns, U.S. ambassador to Russia, to testify. If Rosen and Weissman are going down, the Israel lobby seems to be saying, then so are a lot of prominent people—some of whom, like Zinni, just happen to be their enemies.

This isn't greymail, it's blackmail. It was Zinni, after all, who said of the

Israel lobby and the neoconservatives: "I think it's the worst-kept secret in Washington. Everybody—everybody I talk to in Washington—has known and fully knows what their agenda was [during the run up to the Iraq War] and what they were trying to do."

The intrigue thickened last October as word leaked that a proposed deal was dangled in front of Rep. Jane Harman: AIPAC would back her to become head of the House Intelligence Committee if she would urge the government to treat Rosen, Weissman—and AIPAC itself—with kid gloves. *The Forward* reported, "Several congressional sources confirmed that major donors to the Democratic Party have been lobbying Pelosi on behalf of Harman's nomination to head the intelligence committee and that these attempts were not welcomed by the House Democratic leader." *Time* named Haim Saban, the billionaire Hollywood producer and major AIPAC moneybags, as one of the supplicants. Pelosi didn't fall for it, and Harman was rebuffed. Perhaps this was in the background when the speaker was booed as she addressed the subsequent AIPAC national conference, although Pelosi got back in the Israel lobby's good graces after she stripped a provision from the military appropriations bill that would have required the president to go to Congress for permission to attack Iran.

The defense has fought to get the case against Rosen and Weissman thrown out on any number of grounds: the Espionage Act is unconstitutional, it doesn't apply to their clients but only to government officials, and, last but not least, it's a violation of the Israel lobby's First Amendment "right" to betray classified information to its masters in Tel Aviv. Twisting and turning, threatening and spitting, delaying as best it can, the defense has tried to wriggle out of it every which way, to no avail. The trial is going forward, and the public spectacle of the biggest espionage

scandal involving Israel since the prosecution of Pollard could deliver a body blow to the Israel lobby at a time when it has come in for public scrutiny and criticism as never before.

But that hasn't prevented the lobby from brazenly defending the accused spies, in spite of the preponderance of evidence, and even hailing them as patriots. Writing in *The Forward*, Michael Berenbaum avers, "Instead of being grounds for prosecution, perhaps the influence Steven Rosen and Keith Weissman were trying to exert—making officials and the public aware of the danger from Iran—should be heralded." And why should we hail espionage as laudable in this instance? Well, you see, because the AIPAC defendants were ahead of their time in citing the danger from Iran: "In Washington, as Rosen and Weissman are learning the hard way, the 'crime' is often not being wrong, but rather being right too early or at the wrong time, or being out of sync with the conventional wisdom, or pushing an inconvenient truth."

In light of Judge Ellis's recent ruling that in this trial the Espionage Act is going to be interpreted narrowly and that the burden is on the prosecution to show that the defendants knowingly harmed U.S. national security interests, the defense might be expected to make a pitch similar to Berenbaum's—that, instead of prosecuting Rosen and Weissman, we ought to be pinning medals on their chests.

The AIPAC defendants weren't spies, they were merely ahead of the curve, anticipating the day when a distinction is no longer being made between American and Israeli interests. That is the line we are hearing, as the curtain goes up on the trial of Rosen and Weissman. Whether the jury or the public falls for it remains to be seen. ■

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Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice represented the United States at the Commonwealth Games held in Melbourne, Australia in March 2006.

America's senior diplomat, possibly suffering from jetlag after her long flight, seemed to be poorly briefed on the event she was honoring and the country she was visiting. She asked the U.S. Embassy in Canberra to arrange for a photo op with a group of the American athletes. When informed that the United States is not a member of the British Commonwealth, she then asked for a photo with a group of American military personnel based in Australia. The embassy replied that the United States does not have any military bases in the country. Not to be denied, Rice then asked that the embassy arrange for a group of Australians, including children if at all possible, to be assembled on the street waving small American flags so that she could be photographed beaming appreciatively at the warm welcome she was receiving. The embassy dutifully managed to assemble a group, which included some local employees of the embassy as well as children from a neighborhood school, and was even able to find some flags, enabling the secretary of state to obtain the photos that she so much desired.



Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has made a deal with Saudi King Abdullah to mediate with the United States to avoid a military confrontation, but Vice President Dick Cheney is reportedly not interested.

The Iranians are concerned over increasing U.S. support of ethnic Arab insurgents inside Iran and by the naval buildup in the Persian Gulf. In return for Saudi help, the Iranians promised co-operation in calming the political situation in Lebanon by moderating Hezbollah's challenge to the government of Prime Minister Fouad Siniora. Hezbollah chief Hassan Nasrallah, as a result, recently announced his intention to stop confronting Siniora and agreed to rely on elections to change the political equation in Lebanon. In return, Tehran secured Saudi agreement to intercede with the United States to stop U.S. military operations inside Iran.

The Saudis briefed the United States on the Iranian concerns by sending Prince Bandar bin Sultan, the former ambassador to the United States, to Washington. Although the Iranians have been given general briefings from the Saudis on Prince Bandar's discussions with the Bush administration, they have not been told that Vice President Dick Cheney remains determined to destroy Iran's capability to produce a nuclear weapon before the Bush administration leaves office in 2008.

Cheney and Elliott Abrams at the National Security Council cite projections made by Iranian opposition groups and the Israelis indicating Iran will have a bomb in two years, even though the best American intelligence community estimates indicate that it will take at least five to ten years. Cheney also believes that Iranian concern about opposition activity inside Iran is a sign that the American policy of regime change is working. The Saudis, however, believe that the U.S. actions will only strengthen the Ayatollahs and are trying to convince the White House that diplomacy remains the best option.

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Street Without Joy

Will Bush's surge secure Baghdad's bloodiest block?

By Stewart Nusbaumer

BAGHDAD—Rolling through Baghdad in a convoy of five heavily armed Humvees, we pass buildings pulverized into useless rubble. An Apache helicopter hovers on the horizon. Turning onto a narrow road, we proceed cautiously through low buildings pockmarked by small arms fire and rocket-propelled grenades. A U.S. military jet screeches by overhead.

The Haifa Street neighborhood of Baghdad hosts a strong Iraqi troop and police presence. Checkpoints mark nearly every corner, stacked sandbags replace windows, side roads are closed by makeshift road blocks. There are few remaining residents but much unnerving silence—suddenly broken by the rattat-tat of a large-caliber machine gun.

"That's from the other side of the river," Capt. Christopher Dawson reassures me.

White sparkling flares shoot out of the helicopter and thick black smoke rises from the ground—on the other side of the river. Nowhere in Iraq does it feel more like full-blown war than in Baghdad. And nowhere in Iraq does it feel more normal than in Baghdad.

Driving to the Haifa Street neighborhood, our convoy was enmeshed in a massive traffic jam. On one side, a large construction project banged away. On the other, a group of modest storefronts—auto supply, restaurant, office supplies, barbershop—were open for business. Billboards advertised Kent Cigarettes, The Commercial Bank, and Digital Generators. Workers painted an iron fence surrounding a grove of palm trees.

This tight juxtaposition of war and peace jars the mind, upsetting expectations. Peering out of the port-like window of the Humvee in central Baghdad—a city of six million—I see a flock of sheep crowding the sidewalk. Yes, the American mind has problems handling Baghdad. But the war is always close, cocked to clarify. Comes the crack of small arms fire...

"No problem," a soldier reassures me.

"Yes, I know. It's on the other side of the river."

Three years ago, one year after the invasion of Iraq, the war was raging on this side of the river. U.S. troops called Haifa Street "Grenade Alley." When a single Army battalion had 160 wounded and killed, they called it "Purple Heart Boulevard." For others, it was simply "Death Street." One of the most heavily contested neighborhoods in the capital's vicious sectarian battle, and one of the city's strongholds against occupation, Haifa remains a nasty powder keg.

With long rows of high rises—the apartments once handed out as patronage by Saddam Hussein—providing ideal perches for snipers; with a maze of narrow alleys and rundown mud-brick buildings furnishing superb nooks for ambushes; with some of Baghdad's worst criminals, disgruntled former Ba'athists, and al-Qaeda fanatics; with a volatile Shia and Sunni ethnic fault line, Haifa Street is a perfect home for the bloody infamous. It's a breeding ground for suicide bombers and hardened insurgents armed with rocket-propelled grenades and heavy machine guns,

vicious separatists attacking their neighbors and outraged nationalists firing mortars and Katyusha rockets into the Green Zone.

By 2005, however, the spasms of violence had diminished, the decapitated bodies were fewer, and the insurgents' checkpoints were gone. Iraqi troops with U.S. military advisers and the 1st Cavalry Division were in control. There was speculation that Haifa might be a template for defeating the insurgency, a model for saving Iraq. Then time circled back, and the war returned. At first slowly, then building up to feverish engagements, finally as a bloody backdrop to President Bush's announcement of a troop surge to save Baghdad. Nearly a thousand U.S. and Iraqi troops with F-15 jets and Apache helicopters were thrown into what the media dubbed "The Battle for Haifa Street."

"Today our focus is essential services and helping local residents," says Captain Dawson, B Company Commander of 4th Battalion, 9th Cavalry. The street we stand on is nearly deserted, except for a few old men sipping tea in front of the block's only open store. A herd of neighborhood kids appears from seemingly no where, screaming for chocolate, for footballs, for a sheet of paper from my writing pad, for a pen. "We do limited target operations [of insurgents]," the lanky captain says, patting the shoulder of a dirty-faced, barefoot boy, "but mostly we're here to help the Iraqis."

"Take picture me?" a little boy pleads. It's a curious request, to merely glance at his image on a digital camera. Having

little their entire young lives, when Americans appear they ask for everything. And with rising intensity: "Give me water!" another boy demands.

"While we have a chance here," the captain's light blue eyes are sharp yet gentle, his posture is relaxed but professional, "we have to seize the opportunity. The situation is improving, there is momentum, but we need to invest in the people so if it turns bad again, then they will resist."

When President Bush's four-year "stay the course" finally went bust, the last election being the hammer, he appointed Gen. David Petraeus, a respected counter-insurgency warrior-scholar, to command U.S. forces in Iraq and to create a new strategy, one focused on Baghdad's faltering security. There are three essential elements in his Baghdad Security Plan: "clear" the city's most volatile neighborhoods of anti-government forces, "hold" with troops stationed in the neighborhoods, and "build" local infrastructure.

In the Haifa Street district, there has been a large increase in the number of troops, police, checkpoints, and patrols,

"THIS IS BAD NEIGHBORHOOD," SAYS AN IRAQI INTERPRETER, HIS FACE COVERED SO HE CAN'T BE IDENTIFIED FOR RETRIBUTION. "THE CHILDREN TELL ME AT NIGHTTIME SHIAS DRIVE THROUGH HERE SHOOTING."

and security has improved vastly. Now comes the "build" phase. I ask, "What are these people's main problems?"

A smile spreads across Captain Dawson's face, "Oh, they have many problems. They need jobs, health care, sewer, water, electricity." He playfully ruffles the hair of a boy, saying a short phrase in Arabic. "The people are unsure," he continues, "so we need to deliver something for them to have a vested interest in their government."

"Yeah, but that's going to take a long time, right?"

"I say to Iraqis, three months ago your greatest concern was security. Now what is your greatest concern? Economic. That is progress." The captain walks down the street and talks to an Iraqi man, showing him a piece of paper listing the area's infrastructure projects, promising neighborhood improvements, requesting patience. He credits the Iraqi government for present progress and future development. The kids continue to plea for chocolate and footballs. A sweet little girl with a chipped tooth asks, "Money?"

"This is bad neighborhood," says an Iraqi interpreter, his face covered so he can't be identified for retribution. "The children tell me at nighttime Shias drive through here shooting. This not safe place." A heavy boom. The ground rattles. "I know," I say quickly, "it's across the river."

"Not safe there either."

Just a few minutes east, on the other side of Haifa Street, the Humvees stop in front of a low building hidden behind a wall. "It's been open only three days," a

doctor says about the public health clinic. "We had closed. Security situation bad before. No one come."

With the assistance of the 1st Cavalry Division, four Iraqi doctors, and medicine furnished by the U.S. military, the clinic treated 168 patients in less than four hours. They came because of stomach pain, hip pain, chest pain, back pain—lots of pain in Baghdad—breathing problems, eating problems, chest problems.

"Oh, I'm optimistic" the captain says standing outside the clinic. "You have to be optimistic, otherwise the Iraqis pick up on it."

"The doctors seem somewhat optimistic, too," I say. A boom rips through the air, rattling windows.

"No problem," Captain Dawson says in his calm, confident voice.

All day the fighting raged across the Tigris River, close enough to hear, yet far enough away to be safe. Haifa Street remained quiet—tense yet quiet. The children took their candy booty and promised themselves to get more tomorrow. The old men drinking tea said they will wait and see what happens tomorrow. The doctors at the clinic said they would be back tomorrow. Captain Dawson was pleased that Haifa Street was quiet and hopeful the same will happen tomorrow, demonstrating to Iraqis that they have a future.

But time in Iraq tends to proceed in circles—the war of yesterday becomes the war of tomorrow, the other side of the river becomes your side of the river, their 20 war dead become your 20 war dead. It's change without really changing.

When tomorrow actually arrived, it shook me awake with a humongous explosion, pushing back the curtains and shaking the door. The bridge at Haifa that spans the Tigris was bombed, sections collapsing into the water.

Regardless of the good intentions of our soldiers and their valiant efforts, regardless of the determination of every Captain Dawson in Iraq, the new plan to save the country will fail. I admire optimism, but \$8 billion a month after more than four years says American time is running out. Iraqi time says that the war is moving closer to this side of the river—closer to Grenade Alley, to Purple Heart Boulevard, to Death Street. ■

Stewart Nusbaumer is embedded with various Marine and Army units in Iraq.

Felt of Dreams

Blurring the line between vice and entertainment, the poker industry opened the gambler's game to the masses. Now the amateurs are stealing the show.

By Michael Brendan Dougherty

LEDYARD, CONN.—The crew spent the morning erecting a mini-studio in the Grand Pequot ballroom. From a distance it looks like a glittering black fortress, but close inspection reveals the scuff marks of constant use and travel over the past five seasons. Blue lights and crane cameras swirl around the felt table. Under layers of foundation makeup, poker-pro Mike Sexton and former “Baywatch” actor Vince Van Patten quietly narrate the scene. This is the culmination of the Foxwoods Poker Classic, being filmed for the World Poker Tour. Each player plunked down \$10,000 to be here. They have survived bad draws and over 400 other contenders, including dozens of professionals from Las Vegas. After four eight-hour days dishing with millionaire gamblers, dodging unlucky cards, and scarfing down complimentary pigs in a blanket during breaks, six men have made it to the final table. But not everyone is pleased with the scene.

Perched behind the television audience, members of the World Poker Tour staff throw balled-up napkins at their monitors. They toss their notepads into the air in disbelief. One staffer cries, “This is an insult to poker!” Down on the felt, Tony “Bagels” Cevezza has just revealed the best hand—and his timidity. He didn’t make a bet when he had a full house. For what seems like the hundredth time, the players have not bet at each other after the last card is revealed. The men who are far behind refuse to

make aggressive moves to catch up. And not one has tried to trap another with a “check-raise.” Joe Sebok, a professional player, looks down at the table and declares, “Give me \$300,000 and I could win this tournament without ever looking at my cards.” He’s right. It may very well be the worst poker captured on film. One of these idiots is going to win over a million dollars. How, the crew wonders, had this subtle game of skill been given over to mediocrities trying to get lucky?

The tournament began with more hope. The whole casino was full of life. Poker legends like Erik Seidel posed for pictures as they made their way to the table. Busloads of gray-haired ladies from Boston filed in to swipe their cards at the Wampum Rewards kiosk. Scores of tourists from China and Japan filled the blackjack tables. Spring-breakers sporting Yankees and Red Sox baseball caps jostled back and forth in the labyrinthine hallways past the Keno rooms and craps tables.

Measured by floor space for gaming, Foxwoods is the world’s largest casino. It is operated by the Mashantucket Pequot tribal nation, which at last count has 775 members, 227 of whom are of solely Native American heritage. In agreement with the state of Connecticut, the tribe’s 7,400 slot machines add over \$200 million to the public treasury annually. The entire operation is impressive. The ceilings are high. The floors are clean. The hallways are lined with

chains like Fuddrucker’s and Panera Bread. After getting cleaned out in craps, you can buy a stained-glass suncatcher to commemorate the great times. The seediness of casino life is overwhelmed by the glitter of a shopping mall.

The tournament floor is a maze of 20 full poker tables. But like the casino itself, the tournaments have succumbed to exurban values. Smoking is banned. Cursing too. Trash-talkers are rare, and those players who keep poker faces do not brood with intensity at their opponents. Instead they listen to their iPods, staring benignly as if they were watching television. Professional masseurs travel from table to table, offering backrubs to players aching after a bad beat. Bruising the image of devil-may-care gamblers, the players take cellphone calls from their concerned wives as they play. One young man, determined not to risk an early lead, sat back and played Gameboy for an hour, stopping only to fold his hands. There may be a Native American in the casino somewhere, but the atmosphere couldn’t be more removed from the Wild West of braves and card sharps.

Unless you’ve seen him on television, it would be almost impossible to guess that Daniel Negreanu is one of the best poker players in the world and the tour’s all-time leading money winner. In the frontier West, the last time gambling was considered a profession, figures like Doc Holiday advertised with flamboyant clothing and jewels. But Negreanu would look absurd in a cowboy hat.

Poker's \$10-million man is wearing a Boston Bruins hockey jersey, jeans, and white sneakers—shoelaces untied. He is thin, with frosted hair and a goatee. The amiable Canadian chatterbox is self-deprecating and encouraging of his opponents. Poker could do worse than to make him the face of the game. He's even got a nickname: Kid Poker.

It was ten years ago at the World Poker Finals at Foxwoods that Negreanu first drew notice, being named the best all-around player. But he would not have a repeat this time. Within three hours, he lost 80 percent of his chips. Over the table, he joked with Erick Lindgren, another pro, about going back to Vegas for dinner. Fiddling with his short stack of chips, Lindgren looked up flights on his cellphone. "There's an eight o'clock," he offered, "which means we'd have to leave by five." At almost exactly five, Negreanu dumped all his chips into the pot. He'll still appear on this season's World Poker Tour and any number of other poker shows. With his personality and eagerness to talk to the media, he's already something of a cable-television star, though he makes considerably more money than most who could claim that title.

Two sounds dominate the floor of a poker room. Players amass enormous stacks of the colorful clay chips and play with them obsessively. After a few hours it sounds like the bones of the damned rattling in a miniature hell. The thin high-pitched clatter of ten chips being shuffled and restacked says to less experienced opponents, "I've spent plenty of time at these tables. You'll respect me."

The other sound is the murmur of negotiation. In the run-up to tournaments, professionals strike deals to spread risk and reward more evenly over the field of good players. It minimizes the violent swings in a tournament player's bankroll. "I'll take 50 percent of you, for 2 percent of me," a pro might offer a talented college player. That means if the

pro finishes "in the money" the kid gets 2 percent. If the kid finishes in the money (less likely), half the winnings go to the pro. Some poker players even have investors who subsidize their entry fees. Tournament organizers heavily weigh the pay-out structure in favor of the top spot. An outright winner often receives more than twice as much for his prize than the runner-up. It grabs attention to create instant millionaires, so for players in it for the long haul, it's more profitable to hedge your bets.

IT'S NO SURPRISE THAT POKER ATTRACTS **ENTREPRENEURIAL HEDGERS AND AGGRESSIVE SPECULATORS**. BUT ON THE FELT, **SKILL IS OFTEN HUMBLLED BY LUCK**.

But most poker players aren't conservative with their cash. Poker is a growth industry, and the entire culture that surrounds it is soaked in speculative profit. The young poker journalists, when they aren't providing live updates on their websites, buy and sell domain names. Tournament regulars discuss real-estate flipping over their cards. Before accumulating over \$5 million in winnings, Erik Seidel was an options trader. As a skill game, it's no surprise that poker attracts entrepreneurial hedgers and aggressive speculators. But on the felt, skill is often humbled by luck. It's this element that provides narrative verve for television shows. Corporate sponsors can take away the cursing. Casinos can ban smoking. But as long as chance remains, this game will be dominated by degenerate gamblers. And poker is rarely their only vice.

Poker writer Gary Wise knows the score. He won \$400 from player Mark Newhouse when Newhouse bet him that he couldn't hold a plate of french fries for three hours. Newhouse then bet Wise a \$10,000 gift to charity that he could refrain from gambling for three days. But Newhouse found an irresistible \$400-800

poker game and had to call for permission to reset the bet for the next day at double or nothing. Newhouse still engages Wise in proposition bets, now betting that the writer cannot lose 20 pounds between the Foxwoods tournament and the World Series of Poker.

The first real poker coverage on television was a special of the 1973 World Series of Poker narrated by Jimmy "The Greek" Snyder. Hour-long shows culled from footage of the WSOP went on and off the air until ESPN began to feature

poker consistently in the late '80s. It wasn't the most thrilling programming. A player would make a big bet and a commentator would whisper to the television audience, "I wonder if he has aces?" It wasn't until 2002 when cameras were inserted into the tables that television audiences could follow the play and learn about the strategies involved. For the 2003 World Series, ESPN covered the entire tournament and upped the production value by including brief player profiles. It was also in 2003 that an accountant aptly named Chris Moneymaker put down \$39 in an internet poker tournament and won a seat at the WSOP, then outlasted all other entrants to win \$2.5 million and an instant career in the card game.

The story of an everyman riding through the best gamblers in Vegas launched the poker craze. ESPN began showing up at no-name tournaments, Bravo started "Celebrity Poker Challenge," and the Travel Channel organized the World Poker Tour. Professional players and commentators rushed to sign book contracts and secure endorsements. Though it is not the most profitable game, casinos across the country

renovated and expanded their poker rooms to draw in the masses.

Just a few years ago, the game was played for small change at the local VFW. High-stakes poker belonged to hustlers and rich hobbyists. There was a line between the morally suspect world of gambling and the everyday world of work and play. An average Joe might cross that line and become a gambler for one weekend in Atlantic City, just for entertainment. A gambler was not a normal person. But television made poker seem clean and democratic. Anyone could do it.

Teens began organizing five-dollar tournaments each week at their parents' houses. Underground poker rooms flourished. Whereas pros like Erik Seidel and Howard Lederer cut their teeth at the Mayfair Club in New York City, college students began paying their Upper East Side rents with money won at the Galaxy in midtown—a club run by college students. Even a recluse can sign on to one of the new internet poker sites, don a digital cowboy hat, and start winning money.

Chris Moneymaker had to beat 838 entrants to win the 2003 WSOP. The next year, the field tripled to 2,573. Last

year, nearly 9,000 players from around the world staked \$10,000 to play with the pros and possibly be on ESPN. So many amateurs playing unpredictably has caused some to wonder whether a pro can ever win that tournament again. The poker is bad, but the cameras wager that the players will still be fun to watch. This is reality television after all. It doesn't need a script, just characters.

Chantel McNulty is that sort of sensation. Just 22, she paints her fingernails black, matching her eyeliner, sweater, and iPod. According to a rumor circulating the floor, her coke-thin body has seen some silicone renovation. She talks constantly at the table, her voice that of a teenager with something to hide. She speaks slowly and lets the consonants run into each other. Unconsciously, she rolls her tongue around her mouth. When the ratio of men to women is something like 50 to 1, she qualifies as a modern *femme fatale*. Sitting next to her, George Billias, a local card-hero, eyes her constantly. He finally cracks and says something insane, "You know, if I was gay, I'd convert for you." Indifferently, McNulty cuts back, "Would you leave your wife?"

She recently told a website that named her "Poker Babe of the Month" that she was not interested in playing professionally for more than a few years. At the tournament she was anxious to relate that her peers are making a mistake by dropping out of college and being careless with their money: "They buy big dinners, they try to live the lifestyle. They can get in trouble." She considered her table to be weak and ready for the picking, if only she'd get a few hands. Busting out soon after, she bought several friends dinner, left a \$300 tip, then purchased a plane ticket to Hawaii. She has one more year of college to finish—someday.

Over the four days, all the greats busted out. They held the best hand

when they put their money into the pot, and they knew it. The odds forced them to this decision. Some amateur who didn't know the score stayed in and got lucky with the turn of the cards. The amateurs "suck out."

And so the Foxwoods Poker Classic ends with a whimper. The two finalists, Paul Mateo and Raj Patel, have five years of playing experience between them. Mateo's biographical details become a source of black humor for the crew. He's Italian and owns a waste-disposal business. "The fix is in," Wise jokes as he watches Mateo draw miracle cards to bust the two remaining pros. But the fix, if there was one, doesn't hold up. Raj Patel becomes a millionaire that night. The producers organize the final shot of the program: Patel and Mateo toasting with the sponsor's product, Budweiser. In the stands, pro players jeer. Gary Wise drinks quart after quart of water to prepare for the scale that night: his weight-loss bet with Newhouse starts at midnight. The crew breaks down the set. The poker industry rolls on.

Later that night, as Patel enters the casino poker room, he receives a standing ovation. One eager student of the game tells him, "Next year, it will be me."

As Wednesday passes into Maundy Thursday, the tourists gradually return to their rooms. What remains is poker as it was before the entertainment industry tried to clean it up. The regulars talk to each other about their mercurial fortunes. Some of them have been playing for 18 hours. The \$4-8 limit game that attracts small wallets attached to men with big problems begins to break up at 7 a.m.

Just five miles west of Foxwoods is a little white holiness church. Its sign tells the tourists, "Forbidden fruit creates many jams." It's worth a chuckle. But to the men who can't figure if they have spent the night chasing after good luck or just running from the bad, signs like these are never funny. ■



From MySpace to NoSpace

For Republicans, campaigning on the Web hasn't leveled the 2008 playing field.

By David Weigel

THE VIDEO STARTS with a grungy, bot-tomed-out guitar riff that sounds like the noodlings of a spunky high-school metal band. But when the drums kick in, we see no band. Congressman Ron Paul, the Texas Republican and 1988 Libertarian Party presidential candidate, is going over his notes for a speech in New Hampshire. He piles into a car, arrives at a televised candidate forum, and Paul supporters and skeptics talk into the camera. By the end, they're all believers.

At the start of Easter weekend, this ten-minute video—of a 72-year-old presidential hopeful and his adherents—had been scanned by 16,000 viewers at YouTube.com. The cost, discounting the original camera and the editing software used by a campaign ally in Los Angeles, was nothing.

"Our first priority is to get Ron's message out," says Kent Snyder, Paul's campaign chairman, who marshals videos to YouTube with a skeleton staff of three. "Because we're not in the so-called top tier, we have to really fight for media coverage. For us to be competitive, we have to use the Internet as much as possible."

That's the mantra of every White House candidate. The poll leaders in both parties count on the Web to reel in small-money donors, to build organization, and to win buzz. Barack Obama's Democratic campaign, never really in danger of losing the Fourth Estate's attention, pulled in more than 100,000 donations through its website from January to March. A webbie with casual links to Obama slapped together a parody of Apple's old 1984 ad that turned Hillary into Big Brother and got more than 4 million views.

The minor candidates for the Republican nomination have watched all of this with hungry eyes. Since the party's front bench of John McCain, Rudy Giuliani, and Mitt Romney offers so little to hardcore conservatives, the campaigns polling at one or two percent believe that they can use the Internet to rocket them into contention.

"Think of it like baseball," says David All, a Republican consultant whose last job for a Senate candidate had him guest-blogging on conservative websites and turning his ads into viral YouTube videos. "You've got baseball players in the major leagues, but if they're falling down, you look to the farm team. If you're an MVP in that conservative farm team you can definitely rise up."

Any of the second-tier candidates could become that MVP. The blog aggregator Pajamas Media temporarily pulled Ron Paul from its poll because Paul stubbornly kept winning. California Congressman Duncan Hunter and former Virginia Gov. Jim Gilmore have submitted posts to RedState.com, the popular conservative blog, and RedState veteran Leon Wolf was snapped up for online work by Kansas Sen. Sam Brownback. In February, noticing an online poll that had Colorado Congressman Tom Tancredo struggling in fourth place, adviser Bay Buchanan e-mailed online supporters to point them over to the site. Within 24 hours, Tancredo leaped to the top of the poll with 80 percent of the votes.

"It didn't even look legitimate anymore," Buchanan laughs. "Yes, this was just an online poll, and you don't want to overstate what that means. But

something like that demonstrates the power of the Internet. There are thousands of people who are saying 'contact us, tell us what to do.' We can put this army together. That's the role the Internet plays."

How big is the army, and who could the campaigns convince to suit up? Almost 10,000 conservatives have become "friends" with the 2008 candidates on MySpace, the social networking site. The videos of the five Republican candidates who've taken advantage of YouTube's "YouChoose" aggregator have been viewed about 160,000 times. Hundreds of thousands of conservatives check out forums like FreeRepublic or more streamlined blogs like RedState or LittleGreenFootballs; millions more are online, checking their e-mail, selling beat-up bookshelves on Craig's List, buying half-off DVDs of "24" on Amazon with Super Saver Shipping.

The thinking in the second-tier campaigns is relentlessly hopeful: these conservatives must represent that greater mass of voters who might go online but aren't constantly clicking through videos and blogs. There are swarms of uncommitted Republicans registered to vote in the primary states, and the Internet offers the means to reach them. The plans inside Tancredo, Paul, Hunter, Gilmore and Brownback headquarters are variations on one big idea: build an online machine that can attract those voters, keep them interested, and turn them into volunteers or donors for the campaign. In short, become the new Howard Dean.

Yes, that campaign eventually melted down in a frenzy of primal screaming

and 24-hour cable news replays. Still, if you're running a struggling outsider campaign for president, the Dean movement provides most of your playbook. When Dean entered the race in 2002, the former Vermont governor polled around one percent. He hired Democratic consultant Joe Trippi, who believed that the Internet's potential to organize voters and raise funds had barely been explored. Since the 2000 presidential campaign, the use of personal publishing software and classified-ad-style networking sites had exploded. Dean's staff latched onto both of those trends. They used the networking site MeetUp.com to inform voters of Dean's upcoming stumps. They launched a blog on the Dean for America website with posts by the candidate himself and jokey, convivial writing by campaign staffers as distinct from typical campaign boilerplate as a Thomas Pynchon novel.

Dean's anti-Iraq War, pro-universal healthcare platform was an easy sell, especially next to the reheated Kennedyisms of John Kerry or the featherweight consultant-speak of John Edwards. But in another era, he could have come up short on money and dropped out. Yet Internet tools made it so easy for the campaign to organize and fundraise that Dean temporarily surged to the front of the field. Momentum gathered and supporters organized like splinter cells, hosting their own events, opening their checkbooks at moments that surprised even Trippi. In June 2003, Dean gave an interview on "Meet the Press" that pundits and people inside the campaign considered badly botched, campaign-killing. In the 10 days afterward, \$1.5 million rolled in through the Dean website. In February 2004, after the campaign hit the reef (and Trippi left), it asked online donors to pony up \$700,000 for a last stand in the Wisconsin primary. They gave more than \$1.4 million.

Those numbers are impressive, and they dwarf what the GOP insurgents have raised online as of the end of the first campaign finance filings. When Heritage Foundation media scholar Robert Bluey surveyed the campaigns on their online successes, the outliers were too chagrined to answer, and the frontrunning Republican campaigns have gotten no momentum and only marginal funds online as they've watched Obama, Hillary, and Edwards dominate the medium. Democrats "know it will take years for Republicans to catch up to them in online fundraising," Bluey wrote.

"This just doesn't seem to be in the Republican DNA," says Joe Trippi. "Republican campaigns are much better organized, much more in command and in control, than Democratic campaigns. There's a rugged individualism in the Republican message that sort of forestalls any ability to really talk about what we can do if we all work together. Maybe they consider that communism."

Another explanation is that conservatives have spent most of the last seven years in power, with a congressional majority and a president they were more interested in defending than organizing against. "The two sides of the blogosphere have been structured differently from the beginning," Leon Wolf theorizes. "The Left side was more activist, more of a community, out of necessity, because they were out of power. The Right side was born out of dissatisfaction with what people viewed as the biased mainstream media."

That's only a partial explanation. The blogs, the Facebook and MySpace groups, and the YouTube channels can't turn a second-tier candidate into a contender unless he has enough real-world supporters to take over those media and start growing their movements. Support for the Iraq War still crests 70 percent among Republicans, and support for the surge hovers just as high.

Antiwar conservatives have more presence online than they do in the average meeting of the Fort Bragg Young Republicans. But they're irritating the pro-war majority, not convincing them. Sen. Chuck Hagel, the most public anti-Iraq War voice in the party, tanks so badly in online polls that some have simply started to strike him out. John Hawkins, the founder of RightWingNews and an adviser to Duncan Hunter, claims that the Ron Paul vote that wins occasional online polls is "the same 5,000 people showing up again and again."

"Ron Paul's people spam these polls," says Hawkins. "We're actually appealing to conservatives and slowly rising in those polls across the board. Paul's our Dennis Kucinich. He's not a conservative. He's a libertarian. He's a kook, and his supporters are pretty obnoxious."

"I would caution anyone who'd dismiss the online polls," argues Howard Mortman, a media consultant and blogger at Extreme Mortman. "If you get 50,000 people participating across these polls, it's not scientific, but it means something if Tancredo or Paul end up on top. You can't just say these are yahoos getting online."

They're not yahoos, but neither are they gaining any ground. The mightiest online Republican survey is the GOP Bloggers Straw Poll, operated by gopbloggers.org, that lets voters pick their "first choice" candidate then denote the other candidates as "acceptable" or "unacceptable." Some 11,000 Republicans voted in the March 2007 version of the poll, which excluded both Chuck Hagel and Ron Paul. Fewer than 700 voted for Tancredo, 500 voted for Hunter, 253 voted for Brownback, and 34 voted for Gilmore. For all of their effort, their messages, and their outreach to online conservatives, these candidates have stayed stuck in the back of the pack.

The winner of that straw poll is the candidate who may have doused any

second-tier candidate's hopes of breaking out: former Sen. Fred Thompson. In March, allies of the "Law & Order" star started whispering, at greater and greater volumes, that he might be willing to make a presidential bid. The conservative blogosphere rushed to Thompson like ugly stepsisters trying on the glass slipper. Instapundit, still the premiere blog on the center-right, written by University of Tennessee law professor Glenn Reynolds, became a hub for pro-Thompson news. RedState.com opened its software for Thompson to post a *sturm-und-drang* squibble about the Iran/UK hostage standoff. *National Review's* online portal began posting Thompson's unedited political commentaries, which he reads over the radio in his job moonlighting for the waning Paul Harvey. A video of a Thompson speech shortly after 9/11 quickly attracted 10,000 hits on YouTube, all while fan-edited "draft Thompson" videos were bubbling up.

"The Thompson boom is really not being driven by consultants," Mortman points out. "There are candidates that the Right can settle for, maybe, but no one it seems to be excited for. And then Thompson arrives and people get excited about someone who sounds good and might have an impeccable record. He *might*, I mean. Who knows?"

That, so far, is what the Internet means in the Republicans' presidential race. The hard-luck conservatives who want to use it to gather support aren't having much luck, and the antiwar conservatives aren't broadening their base. The new media tools available online are doing the most for a candidates who weren't having much trouble with the old media tools. Technology has leveled the playing field, but the neoconservative, established candidates are bringing the bigger teams. ■

David Weigel is an associate editor of Reason.

Musharraf's Choice

Appease his countrymen or America

By Eric S. Margolis

COULD PAKISTAN be facing an explosion? America's most important ally in President George W. Bush's war on terror is unstable and violent at the best of times. But this writer, who has covered Pakistan since the early 1980s and recently returned from South Asia, has never before seen this highly strategic nation of 162.4 million so seething with tension and anger.

Last month, demonstrations and riots erupted in Pakistan's principal cities after its military ruler President-General (as he styles himself) Pervez Musharraf sacked the respected head of the nation's Supreme Court, Iftikhar Mohammed Chaudry. Eight senior justices resigned. Protesting lawyers were brutally beaten by police.

The chief justice's offense: daring to investigate the disappearance of some 400 suspects arrested by Pakistan at the behest of the United States. Chaudry was also investigating a series of huge financial scandals and was expected to rule on suits challenging Musharraf's plans to get himself re-elected next year in a rigged vote while retaining command of the 650,000-man armed forces, a clear violation of Pakistan's laws.

Newspapers and television stations were closed down and journalists intimidated for reporting Chaudry's arrest and the ensuing demonstrations. Hundreds of political opponents of the Musharraf regime were arrested. Meanwhile, Pakistani security agents and the army continued a two-year-old campaign to crush opposition to the government in the nation's hitherto

autonomous tribal regions along the Afghan border and to halt a growing rebellion in the western province of Baluchistan.

In the eight years since he came to power in a 1999 coup, Musharraf has relentlessly deconstructed Pakistan's weak democratic institutions, notably parliament and the courts, packing them with yes-men and staging elections so crudely rigged that even the general was embarrassed.

Before Musharraf, Pakistan had at least enjoyed a measure of parliamentary government. But after the 1999 military coup that ousted the inept Nawaz Sharif, Pakistan quickly transformed into a full-fledged military state with only the feeblest pretences of civilian government.

The nation's two most important opposition leaders, former Prime Ministers Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif, are both in exile and have been warned by Musharraf that they face immediate arrest if they return. Both are well known to this writer, as was their predecessor, Zia ul-Haq. Benazir, who remains highly popular, could ably lead Pakistan again. The un-gifted Nawaz, by contrast, is not equal to the job of running one of the world's most difficult nations.

When Musharraf seized power in 1999, Washington denounced him for overthrowing Pakistan's elected government and branded him a military dictator. But once 9/11 occurred, Washington suddenly discovered the very useful general was a "democrat," "statesman," and "key non-NATO ally."

Last month, the outgoing U.S. ambassador to Islamabad, Ryan Crocker, who was moving to the Baghdad Embassy, actually proclaimed, “there is no dictatorship in Pakistan” and insisted that it was a fully functioning democracy. His preposterous claim, which echoed State Department policy, vividly recalls Ambrose Bierce’s wonderful definition of diplomacy: “the patriotic art of lying for one’s country.”

One of the leading causes of anti-American feelings in the Muslim world is our nation’s glaring double standard in which allies are given *carte blanche* while non-allies are scourged for doing the same things. Supporting Pakistan’s military junta as “democratic” while claiming to be fighting a war in neighboring Afghanistan to promote democracy is but the latest example.

General Musharraf, whom I have interviewed, has indeed proved a most useful American ally. Right after 9/11, Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage threatened that the U.S. would immediately attack Pakistan unless it complied with an American ultimatum. This fact was confirmed to me by the former head of Pakistani intelligence and also by Musharraf in his recently published memoirs.

Musharraf quickly caved, purging his army and intelligence service, ISI, of all officers deemed Islamists or “non-cooperative” by the U.S. and replacing them with toadies. He abandoned Pakistan’s own creation, the Taliban, and joined the American-led war in Afghanistan, offering Washington exclusive use of three important military bases in Pakistan and the vital services of ISI. He also largely abandoned the struggle to oust Indian rule from Kashmir, branding Kashmiri *mujahidin*, who had been supported by ISI, “terrorists,” to the glee of India, which had furiously accused Islamabad of “cross-border terrorism.” Pakistan’s press noted tartly, “at least

Taliban held out against the US for two weeks; Pakistan surrendered after a phone call from Washington.”

Musharraf’s security forces arrested 800-1,000 suspected al-Qaeda and other jihadis, subjecting many to brutal tortures before handing them over to the United States. In fact, most of the important al-Qaeda suspects now in U.S. hands were apprehended by Pakistan.

The general’s reward was substantial: full American support as dictator of Pakistan and \$3-5 billion poured into Pakistan’s economy, as well as up to a billion more in secret CIA stipends to senior army officers and bureaucrats. But Musharraf barely survived two assassination attempts by his increasingly infuriated people who deemed his betrayal of the Kashmir *jihad* and the Taliban acts of treason.

Musharraf is now in much the same position that Egypt’s U.S.-backed military ruler Anwar Sadat was before his assassination—feted abroad, hated at home. Washington has relentlessly twisted Musharraf’s arm to adopt measures detested by his people: sending the army to wage a small war against pro-Taliban Pashtuns in the “autonomous” tribal territories; cracking down on local Islamists because of their opposition to the war in Afghanistan; and making nice to India and abandoning Pakistan’s most sacred cause, liberation of Indian-ruled Kashmir. In a clumsy effort to curry favor with Congress, Musharraf even suggested he might recognize Israel.

The war in Afghanistan could not be waged without the use of Pakistani bases. Eighty thousand Pakistani troops are now hunting al-Qaeda, the Taliban, and their allies inside Pakistan, leading Pakistan’s press to scream, “fight India, not your own people.” Musharraf’s soldiers have so far killed some 3,000 tribesmen and lost about 800 men themselves in a war nearly all Pakistanis see as remote-controlled from Washington.

Meanwhile, the Taliban and its nationalist allies have put U.S. and NATO troops in Afghanistan on the defensive and are expanding the territory they control. This is hardly a surprise, since the Taliban is an offshoot of Afghanistan’s Pashtun tribes, who comprise over half of that nation’s population.

Washington has been taking out growing frustration over its inability to either catch Osama bin Laden and Mullah Omar or stop the supposedly defeated Taliban by blaming cross-border infiltration from Pakistan and making threats of hot pursuit by U.S. forces from Afghanistan into Pakistan.

But Pakistan cannot control its wild, mountainous 1,440-mile border with Afghanistan. If the mighty United States can’t stop a million people from illegally crossing its border from Mexico, how can Pakistan, which lacks helicopters, do any better?

American critics charge that Musharraf’s military and intelligence services are playing a double game, appearing to fight the jihadis with one hand while quietly supporting and sheltering them with the other. In fact, there are ever louder rumbles in Washington that Musharraf may have to be replaced by an even more compliant general. A State Department spokesman called on Musharraf to give up command of the army next year. The buzz in Pakistan is that CIA’s “head-of-state hunters” have already picked a replacement for Musharraf.

There is indeed widespread anti-Americanism in Pakistan and deep sympathy for the jihadist case, which is known in the Muslim world as “resistance.” Over ninety percent of Pakistanis see Osama bin Laden as a hero and George W. Bush as a menace to their nation and to Islam. The army remains bitter over abandoning Kashmir and Afghanistan. And Pakistanis know that one day the Americans will depart, and they will have to make accommodations

with the people the U.S. has been fighting. So Pakistan is hedging its bets, no doubt remembering Henry Kissinger's famous quip that it's more dangerous to be America's ally than its enemy.

Islamabad and Delhi concur on one point: the U.S. faces defeats in both Iraq and Afghanistan that will profoundly alter Western Asia's geopolitical dynamics. Both are developing plans for the post-U.S. era. But Washington continues to ignore these distant realities. It is, in the words of Indian strategist Manoj Joshi, "advice immune." Those administration neoconservatives and military hardliners who favor replacing Musharraf or, even worse, sending U.S. troops into Pakistan if it "does not do more"—whatever that means—are courting a calamity in South Asia that might make Iraq appear almost benign by comparison.

Pakistan is a very fragile nation whose feuding, disparate parts—Punjab, Sindh, Northwest Frontier, and Baluchistan—could fly apart. Musharraf has bent over as far as he can to accommodate American demands, and most of his people already want to lynch him. Any more pressure threatens a popular uprising or a military coup. There have long been strong secessionist movements in the Pashtun tribal areas, Sindh and Baluchistan, and dissolution could trigger civil war and possible intervention by India. In 1971, civil war in East Pakistan brought Indian invasion.

Pakistan has 40-60 nuclear weapons, guarded by the army and ISI. In the event of Musharraf's death or a coup, another military junta would likely take over and safeguard the nuclear arsenal. But real danger will come if Pakistan's military leaders split and begin a power struggle in which younger jihadist officers could seize control. This is seen by India's intelligence agency, RAW, as the greatest peril facing both nations.

A Pakistan shorn of its current U.S.-backed military ruler could clearly

become a boiling caldron of anti-Western activity. The U.S. campaign to pacify Afghanistan would collapse and so would Washington's struggle against jihadist groups. Coming on the heels of the Iraq debacle, the overthrow of the American-supported regime in Islamabad would be a geopolitical catastrophe for the U.S. and an enormous victory for Osama bin Laden and all like-minded jihadists.

But there is an alternative to Musharraf's insistence that *le déluge* awaits Pakistan if he is no longer dictator. That is the swift and full restoration of parliamentary government in Pakistan. Washington can either do it now, while there is still time, or wait until Musharraf is blown up and Pakistan sinks into the most violent chaos, and then, as in Iraq, try to cobble together a democratic government amid a brutal civil war.

Americans should have no illusions that Pakistan is our democratic ally in the war on terror, as the administration has long claimed. Pakistan is a time bomb ticking down to a huge explosion that could inflict grave damage on America's regional interests, further energize anti-American groups everywhere, put nuclear-armed India and Pakistan in confrontation, and ignite a regional crisis fraught with perils for all concerned. ■

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Exporting Idiocracy

Sending American-style education to China could stunt the dragon's rise.

By Peter Wood

CHINA'S RISE from the nightmarish reign of Mao Zedong to maker-of-all-things WalMart typically rests as lightly as a feather on me. Or rather, many feathers: I think of China as spreading a down comforter over the great futon of American life. Sometimes as I doze comfortably in this splendid world of cheap luxuries, however, I am agitated by an intrusive thought. Where is all this leading?

China's barreling economic growth, military vigor, gargantuan trade surpluses, and disdain for Western niceties like elected government and free speech are almost enough to make me want to

go out and buy something American. Then I get hold of myself. What do Americans make besides YouTube videos, pornography, and vitamins? In any case, I frequently run across the assurance that having achieved economic freedom, China will inexorably move towards political freedom. I am a little shaky on the mechanism by which this will occur, but occur it must. The Chinese down comforter comforts all alike and makes no exception for political theorists.

I don't mean to imply any reservations about the value of free trade between the U.S. and the world's most

protectionist regime. I am second to none in my exuberance for household goods that, adjusted for inflation, cost about the price of a red licorice stick when I was growing up. And Milton Friedman rules.

No, what jabs me, like a quill poking through a feather pillow, is the political regime behind China's beneficence to Western consumers. When that quill pokes me I think of Tacitus explaining how the Romans finally pacified the rambunctious Britons. They built the Britons baths and introduced them to Roman delicacies. "All this in their ignorance they called civilization, when it was but a part of their servitude."

China, if not best buddies with North Korea, seems to like having a mad dictator on a short leash. The diplomatic logic is that if other countries want to make sure Fido doesn't break loose, they have to deal with the Man in Beijing. China to this day hinders Cambodia from any serious reckoning with Beijing's former clients, the Khmer Rouge. And China is intent, sooner or later, on snatching Taiwan. It is increasingly hard to believe that the U.S. would risk war to

woman from Shanghai who earned her way into Harvard by bucking the usual academic grind in China and focusing instead on extracurriculars. Meijie is on our side: "There is something in the American educational system that helps America hold its position in the world." Meijie's goal is to bring American-style liberal education to China.

Several comments come to mind. First, Meijie better hurry and get the job done before U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings achieves her goal of dismantling American-style liberal education in America. Spellings is in the midst of decertifying the primary liberal arts accrediting body in the United States, the American Academy of Liberal Education. She is also ramrodding through a federal system of No-Child-Left-Behind-style testing requirements for higher education.

I've been speaking out against Spellings's actions, but that was before I grasped their cool multicultural logic. It appears that what's really happening is that Spellings has cut a deal with China. We get a version of China's Imperial Examination system dating back to the

bits of American educationism as possible. Meijie is not, of course, operating all alone. I feel free to write about this because Ann Hulbert has already played the role of Richard Armitage by outing our hiding-in-plain-sight operatives. As Hulbert puts it, Meijie is at the center of "a cosmopolitan array of Harvard undergraduates [who] would offer a dose of the more free-wheeling American campus and classroom experience" to Shanghai. They have in mind "extracurricular excitement and social discovery—chances for students to try new things and connect with one another."

Yes, that's exactly what happens on American campuses. Some of those "new things" and "connections" aren't what the parents had in mind, but that's the price of freedom. Hulbert does a good job tracking our agents of influence. The McKinsey consulting firm, for example, has issued a report on "China's Looming Talent Shortage" that emphasizes the need for China to stop looking at education as "knowledge transfer" and get busy teaching "teamwork" for the "global era." Clearly, the McKinsey folks are part of the Spellings Swap. Just as our Department of Education embraces "knowledge transfer" as the be-all-and-end-all of American higher education, our consultants are persuading China to scrap that approach in favor of co-operate-don't-compete, learn-with-love atmospherics.

Hulbert doesn't mention this, but the Harvard effort to derail Chinese education is also attracting public benefactors. In 2003, Albert Merck—he of the pharmaceutical fortune—and his wife Katharine gave \$15 million to Harvard to promote the fruits of Harvard's educational research "around the world." The Mercks are enamored with the idea of "global education." One of their projects is WIDE World, which offers online courses to teachers in many countries. But Al Merck and WIDE

SPELLINGS HAS **PULLED OFF THE GRANDEST CULTURAL SWAP** SINCE NATIVE AMERICANS GAVE THE CONQUISTADORS **CHOCOLATE IN EXCHANGE FOR SMALLPOX.**

defend Taiwan, no matter what we say. Add to this that China's spies have reportedly stolen vast stores of our classified aerospace, nuclear, and military research. Suddenly I'm feeling a whole porcupine in my pillow.

But all is not lost. There was good news in the April 1 *New York Times Magazine*, in an article by Ann Hulbert entitled "Re-education." Hulbert describes the enthusiasm among Chinese for American-style education. She opens with the story of Harvard freshman Tang Meijie, an exceptional young

Sui Dynasty in AD 605, and in exchange, China gets our flexible and pragmatic form of liberal education. Spellings has pulled off the grandest cultural swap since Native Americans gave the Conquistadors chocolate in exchange for smallpox.

But that analysis may not be 100 percent correct. Let me try again. Another possibility is that Tang Meijie is a highly valued CIA operative. Her Mission Impossible objective is to undermine the Chinese economy by getting the Chinese to adopt as many faddish and silly

World's executive director, David Zarowin, are especially focused on bringing Harvard Ed School wisdom to China, and they have a China Project Manager, Qin Jiang, specifically to work with WIDE World's "collaborators in China." In 2005, WIDE World launched a joint project with the Shanghai Distance Education Group, which included stars such as "Min Zeng now commonly known as WIDE World's Oprah Winfrey due to her command of the audience."

Our master plan for dumbing-down Chinese education, however, is not just about atmospherics or theatrics. Let's

mathematical, musical, kinesthetic, spatial, interpersonal, and intrapersonal—and later added an eighth, "naturalist" intelligence, which is attentiveness to the environment. Gardner believes all eight kinds of intelligence need to be cultivated, so an M.I. approach to education would necessarily be broad. Moreover, this kaleidoscopic view of intelligence emphasizes discovery over didactic approaches.

Is Gardner's theory consonant with what we know about the mind from more rigorous forms of inquiry? Or is he misusing the word "intelligence" to

dren ... individual differences [and] active learning." Gardner wasn't mentioned by name, but according to Jie-Qi Chen, "it was quickly perceived" that M.I. would be "one of the main theoretical frameworks for China's curricular reform."

Let us be patient. It took nearly a century for the "reforms" of Dewey's progressivism to make American schools into places that cultivate self-assurance over knowledge, co-operation over achievement, blandness over distinction, and dullness over everything. Gardner is widely recognized as one of Dewey's most important heirs, and we need to give his ideas some time to turn China into a nation of self-satisfied ignoramuses.

This thought is as a freshly smoothed pillow to my troubled sleep. Assured that the Long March of the Revolution will inexorably reach the Great Frivolity of American-style educationism, I can worry a little less about the coming Chinese hegemony. Sure, it will take more than Meijie's infectious enthusiasm for extracurriculars and liberal arts and more than Howard Gardner's multiply intelligent disciples, but we've got lots more where that stuff came from. With luck, we can push up the functional illiteracy rate, stigmatize the cultivation of memory, turn mathematics instruction into a culturally sensitive cul-de-sac, and establish academic credit for life-experience in China before they suspect a thing.

I do worry that the Chinese will begin to distinguish between the worthy and the unworthy aspects of American-style liberal education. That could gum up the works. Perhaps our patriotic duty is to forestall that by shipping the whole of the Harvard University School of Education to China. Just a thought. ■

Peter Wood has recently been appointed Executive Director of the National Association of Scholars.

GARDNER'S THEORY HAS INSTANT DEMOCRATIC APPEAL SINCE IT IMPLIES THAT NO ONE IS TRULY DUMB. WE ARE ALL JUST DIFFERENT.

not forget: this is American educationism. And that means theory. Hulbert eventually gets to this: "If there is an American figure to whom Chinese proponents of more active, multidimensional, student-centered learning have listened especially attentively over the past half-decade, it is Howard Gardner of the Harvard Graduate School of Education." Gardner is, of course, the originator of "Multiple Intelligences" theory, or M.I., the charming idea that intelligence isn't a single capacity but many separate capacities. Gardner's theory has instant democratic appeal since it implies that no one is truly dumb. We are all just different. I may have trouble with calculus, but I'm really good at skipping stones. I have stone-skipping intelligence. So there.

Gardner's arguments are occasionally more sophisticated than this but not by much. M.I. theory has pretty direct links to the contemporary classroom. If it is true, we shouldn't try to teach the same stuff to everybody in the same way. Gardner originally distinguished seven kinds of intelligence: linguistic, logical-

speak of talents? Is my stone-skipping excellence really best conceived as exemplary of my "kinesthetic intelligence"? Or do I just have good hand-eye co-ordination?

I don't have to answer this to be delighted that China began a national project in 2002, "Using M.I. Theory to Guide Discovery of Students' Potential." Hulbert quotes a Chinese high-school principal who sees a link between Gardner's theory and the traditional Confucian emphasis on the need for teachers to understand the character of their students. Hulbert's article prompted me to look a little further, and she is right. Gardner is catching fire in China. He has attracted graduate students to his program at Harvard; he went to China on a speaking tour in May 2004; and his book, *Multiple Intelligences*, was published in Chinese in 1999. In a conference paper last year, "How MI Theory fits into Traditional and Modern China," Jie-Qi Chen also points out that a 2001 directive issued by the central government ruled that Chinese education had to focus on "developmental characteristics of chil-

Arts & Letters

FILM

[*The Year of the Dog*]

A Women's Best Friend

By Steve Sailer

"THE YEAR OF THE DOG," with "Saturday Night Live" veteran Molly Shannon as a spinster secretary looking for love, sounds like just another romantic comedy, such as "The Truth about Cats and Dogs" or "Must Love Dogs." Yet this sympathetic portrayal of the making of an animal-rights activist/pest turns out to be one of the odder and more memorable movies of the year so far.

In recent years, the typical Hollywood filmmaker's career path has been first to write screenplays for others and then move on to directing. Not every verbalist, however, is an equally adept visualist. First-time director Mike White, screenwriter of "School of Rock" and "The Good Girl," is so unimaginative with images—he mostly just plunks his actors dead center in the frame and has them stare goggle-eyed into the camera—that his little quasi-comedy stumbles into a neo-Egyptian monumentality.

Fortunately, White has a strong cast, anchored by the disconcertingly intense Shannon, the diva of discomfort. Her Peggy is Shannon's "SNL" signature character Mary Katharine Gallagher, the Catholic schoolgirl with Asperger's Syndrome, grown a quarter century older and sadder but no wiser. Now 42, Shannon plays awkward Peggy without

makeup, every wrinkle in her delicate Irish skin exposed by the fluorescent office lighting.

Peggy's only friend besides her beagle, Pencil, is her fellow secretary, the contrastingly outgoing Layla (a scene-stealing Regina King, who was Cuba Gooding Jr.'s wife in "Jerry Maguire"). While black-white masculine friendships are far more common in cop movies and commercials than in daily life, Peggy and Layla's closeness is realistic: pink-collar working women enjoy the warmest interracial bonds of any class. Her black pal is conducting a publicly passionate affair with the office lothario, while Peggy displays the traditional Hibernian uneasiness over sex.

"The Year of the Dog" then introduces two disparate men into her life to make the point, a bit formulaically, that sexual and social attraction are often at odds. The older and less hormone-driven we get, the harder it is to find somebody of the opposite sex who fits the rut we've dug for ourselves.

One night, Peggy's beloved beagle gets into her neighbor's yard, eats some snail poison, and dies. To cheer her up, the construction worker next door, played by the currently omnipresent regular guy character actor John C. Reilly, invites her out to dinner. Layla is ecstatic that Peggy finally has a date. Unfortunately, he turns out to love hunting, which Peggy can't abide.

Then a handsome but effeminate man from the animal shelter offers her a vicious German shepherd that is otherwise doomed to be put down. A vegan, he instructs Peggy in the horrors of factory farms, and soon she's in love. Peter Sarsgaard, who normally plays strong, silent types like the sniper in "Jarhead" and Chuck Lane, the long-suffering

editor of Marty Peretz's *New Republic* in "Shattered Glass," portrays the pet person as a little too obviously gay—to everybody except Peggy, whose heart gets broken.

With men letting her down, she turns even more to dogs for consolation, becoming a strident PETA-style activist. Strikingly, the script shows her losing the arguments she starts. Peggy assumes, though, as most people do, that she gets out-debated not because she's wrong but because she's not glib enough.

She forges her boss's signature on a check to a farm animal rescue charity, adopts 15 dogs off death row at the pound, and ruins the fur coats of her insufferable sister-in-law. Peggy is on the path to being a crazy old lady with too many pets in her squalid house, but "The Year of the Dog" asks whether being an animal addict is worse than sane loneliness.

PETA fanatics are the one sort of progressive that everybody loves to look down upon. After Dutch immigration restrictionist Pim Fortuyn was gunned down in 2002, the European center-left establishment immediately proclaimed (wrongly, it turned out) that their vilification of anti-immigrationists had nothing to do with Fortuyn's murder. The assassin was just some animal-rights loony!

And yet, the animal-rights cause is likely to triumph partially. As the world gets richer, the worst abuses of factory farming will become less tolerable. Moreover, while we deplore Koreans' taste for dog, hard-headed Paul Johnson has suggested that our descendants won't understand how we complacently devoured the comparably intelligent pig. Too bad they're so tasty ... ■

Rated PG-13 for some suggestive references.

BOOKS

[*Rumsfeld: His Rise, Fall, and Catastrophic Legacy*, Andrew Cockburn, Scribner, 247 pages]

King of the Plastic Rambos

By Martin Sieff

"Good morning, good morning!"
the General said
When we met him last week on
our way to the line.
Now the men that he smiled at are
most of them dead
And we're cursing his staff for
incompetent swine.

REREADING SIEGFRIED SASOON'S great poem of World War I, the sense is overwhelming that it was a vision of former U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld. His eerie, uncrackable arrogance and unwavering faith in his own genius have so far cost the lives of more than 3,000 American soldiers and maimed more than 22,000. But not the slightest hint of self-doubt or remorse intrudes. One is left with little doubt that he sleeps the sound sleep of the just every night.

Yet after six years in the limelight he so relished as supreme warlord of the global hyper-power, we know little about the real Rumsfeld. Andrew Cockburn, for more than 20 years one of the most magnificently politically incorrect mavericks of English-language journalism, has now rectified the incompetence, laziness, and plain servility of the mainstream American media with this invaluable new book. Lean and muscular, with not a sentence wasted, it documents old suspicions, strips away hoary myths, and reveals startling new knowledge.

Rumsfeld was supposed to have been a brilliant captain of industry who brought the driving efficiency and tower-

ing intellect of a successful CEO to the running of the U.S. Department of Defense. But in reality, Cockburn reveals, his business record was muddling and inept: he proved to be a byword for incompetent management. At first, his endless blaze of terse messages and dictates made thousands quiver, generating panic and chaos wherever they fluttered in the cavernous rings of the Pentagon. Then it dawned on the secretary's underlings that he never remembered to follow up on any of them.

Rumsfeld was sold by his myth-makers—and even believed himself—that he was a ruthless juggernaut, killing obsolete weapons programs and dragging the American Armed Services kicking and screaming into the 21st century. Instead, as Cockburn shows, when it came to taking on the generals and the military-industrial complex, Rummy was a toothless, clawless old teddy bear. The only major system scrapped during his six-year tenure under Bush was the Crusader heavy artillery gun. And Rumsfeld did not even have the interest or stomach to heft the axe. Responsibility fell to Paul Wolfowitz, who waffled endlessly before doing so.

Even Rumsfeld's supposed finest hour, his calm and commanding presence as a leader after a hijacked airliner crashed into the Pentagon on Sept. 11, the moment that truly "made" him in the eyes of America and gave him the towering reputation that freed him to wreak so much havoc in the years that followed, was the result of his serene ineptitude, not a cool-headed Caesar-style grasp of command.

Cockburn interviews eyewitnesses and security guards who accompanied Rumsfeld on that fateful morning and makes clear that the SecDef abandoned his command post at a key time during the crisis. He spent most of that fateful morning drafting rules of engagement for U.S. fighter pilots to deal with the hijacked airliners. "This was an irrelevant exercise for he did not complete and issue them until 1:00 p.m., hours after the last hijacker had died," the author writes.

Rumsfeld, the most micromanaging defense secretary in U.S. history, took no part whatsoever in directing the military when the attacks were actually in progress. "Later, when asked why he had taken no part in military operations that morning, Rumsfeld blithely insisted it was not his job," Cockburn notes. The nerve center of America's national defense that day was not in the hands of Douglas MacArthur redux but of Mr. Magoo.

Wolfowitz, Rumsfeld's chief deputy who was obsessed with conquering Iraq for his good friend Ahmad Chalabi but never with hunting down the actual perpetrators of the 9/11 atrocities, also shrivels under the merciless light of Cockburn's research. He was so feckless that he did not even realize that to keep 150,000 men in Iraq indefinitely actually meant tying up three times that number as the forces had to be rested, rotated, and prepared for their new tours of duty. Wolfowitz, Cockburn documents, was another cartoon figure—notorious for never being able to make a clear-cut decision. If Rumsfeld had the unrelenting self-regard of Mr. Magoo, Wolfowitz emerges from these pages more as Porky Pig, the stutter of indecision reducing to chaos everything he touched.

But this bungling in no way reduced Wolfowitz's contempt for the men in uniform he was charged with directing. "Where do all these stupid generals come from?" Cockburn cites the deputy secretary as asking.

Wolfowitz was fond of talking endlessly about the buzzword "maneuvers" without apparently realizing that many troops are required to carry them out. At one point before the invasion of Iraq, Cockburn writes, Wolfowitz and company seriously thought all that was needed to topple Saddam was 10,000-15,000 American troops.

Cockburn also performs a valuable service in showing how the scare tactics that so effectively hyped the negligible threat of Saddam Hussein developing new weapons of mass destruction were nothing more than a rerun on a larger

stage of the false alarms Rumsfeld, Wolfowitz, and their neoconservative blood brothers sounded about non-existent Soviet death rays and antiballistic missile wonder weapons in the late 1970's and early 1980's. Donald Rumsfeld's A-team of the 21st century was staffed by the B-team of a quarter century before—and trafficked in exactly the same kind of hysteria.

In the run-up to the Iraq War, only Seymour Hersh at the *New Yorker* and I at UPI reported in a sustained manner on the profound divide over the supposed threat from Iraq between the professional U.S. military, which overwhelmingly knew better, and Rumsfeld's cadre of neocon true believers. Here, too, Cockburn does indispensable work. He confirms Hersh's key reports and my own with a wealth of documentation. He also focuses on the key role of Dou-

glas Feith's Office of Special Plans in churning out wild tales that serious intelligence analysts recognized immediately for the worthless and unsubstantiated junk that they were.

Cockburn also confirms my and Hersh's reporting on the resentment that so many long-serving military officers felt over Rumsfeld's contempt for their experience and his childish enthusiasm for the recommendations of flaky amateurs, the three most influential of whom were Richard Perle, Newt Gingrich, and former Director of Central Intelligence James Woolsey. All were gung-ho for the invasion of Iraq. Senior military officers in the Pentagon, Cockburn writes, dubbed them "the plastic Rambos."

Cockburn also has startling insights into the downing of a U.S. Air Force E-P3 electronic surveillance aircraft after it collided with a Chinese F-8 interceptor buzzing it in spring 2001. Now forgotten, the incident was the most serious and embarrassing foreign-policy snafu for the Bush administration before the 9/11 attacks and led to a short but intense escalation of tensions with China.

But was the E-P3 simply carrying out long established and necessary routine surveillance? Cockburn says no: "These espionage flights had recently been stepped up for no better reason than that the air force had stopped monitoring the former Soviet cold war enemy and had E-P3s to spare."

He proves equally unrelenting in his analysis of Rumsfeld's most expensive high-tech passion, the Future Combat Systems program. The FCS, he writes,

was projected to consume at least \$128 billion by 2014 and would consist of manned and unmanned air and ground vehicles all tied together by computer networks that would automatically identify targets and instantly destroy them with precise firepower. So rapidly would it destroy enemies, proponents boasted, that U.S. troops would no longer need armor in their vehicles.

Tell that to the Marines, especially the ones serving in Iraq. In March 2005, Cockburn notes, the Government Accountability Office told Congress, "only one of over 50 technologies (required for the FCS) are mature." Another way of saying it remained a sci-fi fan's fantasy.

Cockburn has not written a crowd-pleaser. But at a time when even valuable writing on the Bush administration is bloated and filled with melodramatic set-pieces, he has produced a sober, precise indictment, backed by remarkable documentation.

One has a few caveats: while Wolfowitz and Feith receive their due, too many significant actors on the Rumsfeld and Cheney teams manage to successfully skulk in the shadows. Cockburn understandably kept his primary focus on his protagonist. But perhaps Scribner's could be prevailed upon to offer him a healthy advance for a sequel, *Rumsfeld's Lieutenants*?

Also, Cockburn refers to but does not quote from Midge Decter's notorious hagiography of Rumsfeld published in 2003. This remarkable study in shameless sycophancy deserves far greater remembrance than it has received.

Finally, something must be done about the dustcover of the book. When you close it and place it on a shelf, one of Rumsfeld's eyes is staring remorselessly at you from the spine, wherever you stand. Surely this is too much to ask even those of stout mind and spirit to endure?

Otherwise, unconditionally recommended. But let us leave the last word to Sassoon: "He's a cheery old card,' grunted Harry to Jack / As they slogged up to Arras with rifle and pack. / But he did for them both by his plan of attack." ■

Martin Sieff is national security correspondent for United Press International. He has reported from more than 60 countries, covered seven guerrilla wars and ethnic conflicts and been nominated three times for the Pulitzer Prize for international reporting.

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[*Why I Turned Right: Leading Baby Boom Conservatives Chronicle Their Political Journeys*, Mary Eberstadt, ed., Threshold Editions, 291 pages]

Leaving the Left Bank

By Richard B. Spencer

THE ATTACHMENT to conservatism by a broad swath of the American public has confused many a concerned Leftist. As Mary Eberstadt notes in the introduction to her enjoyable new collection of essays, *Why I Turned Right*, the enlightened often ask themselves, “How can so many supposedly rational fellow citizens out there believe all that backward reactionary stuff?”

In answering this question, Eberstadt turns directly to culture (and not GOP personalities and policies), which she views as the source of conservative ascendancy. It is true that America is the incubator of much that is vulgar in global consumer culture, and our everyday manners continue to descend into brashness and crudeness. Still Eberstadt’s general point holds, at least with regard to political, social, and religious values. Republicans may lose more elections and Britney and Paris may continue to dominate the airwaves, but a deeper, rooted conservatism will remain.

In addressing this phenomenon, Eberstadt focuses on the personal, soliciting a number of “baby boom conservatives”—major opinion-makers, scholars, and public intellectuals—to “chronicle their political journeys.” The list includes Peter Berkowitz, Joseph Bottum, David Brooks, Danielle Crittenden, Dinesh D’Souza, Stanley Kurtz, Tod Lindberg, Rich Lowry, Heather Mac Donald, P.J. O’Rourke, Sally Satel, and Richard Starr.

All of the essays are autobiographical, and Eberstadt counseled the authors to adopt an anecdotal, sometimes even confessional, tone. All but a few are

former leftists or liberals, and much of the volume reads as a series of “conversion stories”—accounts of the very moment the author “turned right.” O’Rourke is the most specific, announcing that he became a conservative at 11:59 p.m. on Dec. 4, 1997, when his wife gave birth to the couple’s first child. For a parent, “every change reeked of danger or, in the case of diaper changes, just reeked.” Resistant to leftist innovation,” O’Rourke wants to “stand with Bill Buckley athwart the tide of history shouting, ‘Don’t swallow the refrigerator magnet!’”

Why I Turned Right is a collection of elite opinion, but, as the O’Rourke example indicates, many average Americans find conservatism meaningful for the very same reasons that the contributors do.

As the essays are often conversion stories, one gets the impression that some authors did not really leave the Left, but the Left left them. The *New York Times* columnist David Brooks boasts of being a “progressive, national greatness” conservative, an orientation that seems indistinguishable from a “Great Society” liberal (even if Brooks is willing to criticize the harmful “unintended consequences” of LBJ’s welfare state).

Not surprising for a “progressive,” Brooks still thinks the invasion of Iraq is “one of the noblest endeavors the United States, or any great power, has ever undertaken”—despite his newfound conservatism that leads him to doubt, momentarily, the ability of conservatives to transform the Middle East into a liberal democracy.

Some of the best essays are focused on young adulthood, when the contributors were first becoming intellectually aware. As Eberstadt ironically notes, politically correct academia “may turn out to be the real cradle of conservatism as we know it—in a purely negative sense, that is.” It is no coincidence that all but one contributor remember their college experience as forming their political identities.

Most of the contributors had liberal parents and were vaguely “on the Left”

when they entered college, but they reacted viscerally to the carefree nihilism of antiwar protestors, the militancy of “black power,” the dogma of campus feminism—Dinesh D’Souza remembers that one professor was disturbed by the phallic architecture of Dartmouth’s Baker Library—and the illiberalism of affirmative action.

D’Souza’s chronicling of his undergrad days at Dartmouth is one of the most lively essays. Arriving in New Hampshire as a shy international student, he began to turn right when, at freshman convocation, the college chaplain announced that one in three members of the incoming class would “have a homosexual experience to climax” before graduation.

D’Souza was an undergrad during the ascendancy of the “tenured radicals” in the early ’80s and recognized immediately that there was little about academic culture that a conservative would want to conserve. It was thus necessary for the Right to become radical itself. D’Souza joined the *Dartmouth Review*, a student paper advised by a sympathetic English professor, Jeffrey Hart. Long before affirmative action bake sales, the *Dartmouth Review* wrote the book on right-wing hijinx. What campus paper today would be willing to publish a transcript of the idiotic rantings of an affirmative-action hire or offer an article speculating whether campus activists were actually protesting against their own ugliness?

Others who eventually turned right were initially seduced by the sirens’ song of the academic Left. O’Rourke remembers that at Miami of Ohio in the ’60s, there was a main street with two types of bars on opposite sides. On the right sat buxom sorority sisters with whom a guy like him had no chance. On the left, a different crowd—variously hippy and urbane—who drank beer from the bottle and mouthed “Marx, Mao, and Marcuse.” O’Rourke contemplated to himself, “I’ll bet those girls do it.” They did, and without ever seriously studying Marxism, O’Rourke became a commie to meet chicks.

It was only after he left the safe confines of academia and prolonged adolescence that he became conservative. In O'Rourke's charming and self-deprecating account, his turn right was just as emotional and nonintellectual as his turn left had been: he experienced the sting of giving away hard-earned money in taxes; he felt embarrassed when he failed the Army's physical exam for the draft while clean-cut working-class kids were marched off to war; and, finally, he shuddered at the joy and responsibility of the aforementioned birth of his child.

While at Yale in the '70s, Heather Mac Donald was far too intellectual to be seduced by hippies, drugs, and sex. Instead, she was taken in by the fascinating and mysterious literary theories of Jacques Derrida and Paul de Man. Not a particularly political form of leftism, deconstructionism was based on demonstrating that there is no connection between a text and any single meaning. While such a philosophy might seem to inspire interpretative richness (and this is sometimes the case), in the hands of the Derrida devotees, it became a license for great works to mean just about anything. Mac Donald turned right when she exited the inconsequential realm of deconstruction and made the "reality of life outside the text" her object of study.

As Mac Donald's education suggests, there is also a certain value in conservatives confronting the grand theory of the Left. Peter Berkowitz, a law professor and scholar of philosophy, views this as indispensable for forging a conservative philosophy. Berkowitz's model is Leo Strauss, who confronted and attempted to overcome those thinkers who, he felt, represented the most destructive aspects of the modern age.

Sadly, today's "theory" is not nearly as productive. As Mac Donald notes, whatever their failings, deconstructionists had the good taste to analyze the "dead white male" masterpieces of the canon. Since Jesse Jackson's call, "Hey, Hey, Ho, Ho, Western Civ has got to go!," Shakespeare has become optional, and mind-numbing identity politics manda-

tory. Fewer and fewer undergrads are intellectually equipped to turn right or any other direction not proscribed by campus gurus.

Mac Donald's realist sensibility is similar to that of Sally Satel, a psychiatrist who brought upon herself the ire of her highly placed colleagues when she dared to write about how political correctness is corrupting medicine. Satel does not really think of herself as a conservative—she is pro-choice and has little sympathy for conservative Christians. Still there is much to admire in Satel: "I am eager to expose muddled thinking; does this make me a 'conservative psychiatrist'?"

Being "no nonsense" is a requisite but an inadequate basis for a political philosophy. While the volume offers many accounts of "why conservatism?," I'm still left wondering what contemporary American conservatism actually is.

Many of the contributors describe American conservatism as based on the classical liberalism of Adam Smith and J.S. Mill or a proper balance between the Enlightenment and the Bible. Joseph Bottum, the editor of the theologically minded journal *First Things* claims, "real conservatism usually begins when you find in yourself a limit, a place beyond which you will not go." For Bottum, this is abortion, and "all the rest is just a working out of the details." It is true that prominent strands of the conservative tradition emphasize individual liberty, the absolute value of human life, and realism. Yet these are only partial answers to the question of what kind of political Right and conservative culture we want in the future.

Most will probably sympathize with O'Rourke in observing that one generally becomes more conservative when one gets a job and has kids. Yet none of this explains why O'Rourke, the responsible family man, would support the invasion of Iraq and a host of other activist positions.

In these pages, Eberstadt has opined that, although there are serious disputes within the Right—"democratists" vs. foreign-policy realists, immigration

restrictionists vs. open-borders advocates being the most prominent—there is an enduring conservative core greater than these issues. This might be true. And yet, I wonder if unending foreign intervention and unchecked Third World immigration might be exactly the things that fracture not only the GOP but, more importantly, America's conservative consensus.

Why I Turned Right is a thoroughly readable and pleasurable account of the personal experience of recognizing "I'm conservative." As such it is invaluable. Nevertheless, before further expounding on our conservative epiphanies, we need to seriously re-think what being on the Right means in the 21st century. ■

[*Terror In The Balance*, Eric A. Posner and Adrian Vermeule, Oxford University Press, 328 pages]

State of Emergency

By Bruce Fein

The 9/11 abominations pulverized not only the Constitution's time-honored checks and balances but the scientific method for arriving at political wisdom and justice. In *Terror in the Balance*, law professors Eric A. Posner and Adrian Vermeule celebrate the pulverization. The two academics maintain that both history and reason justify concentrating unchecked power in the executive to address ostensible emergencies; that presidents can be trusted to act like statesmen; that their national-security motives will be unsullied; that judges should be sidelined; that jurists have nothing constructive to contribute in responding to external dangers; and that after the emergency ceases, checks and balances will return in full bloom. All's well that ends well. The post-9/11 aggrandizement of the White House is unworrisome.

The founding fathers held a contrary view. They believed that proper deductions must be made for the ordinary depravity of human nature in all branches of government; that ambition must be used to counteract ambition; that "trust me" is a worthless protection against executive abuses; that presidents will be inclined to manufacture emergencies to usurp power; that unchecked power breeds both folly and oppression; that an independent federal judiciary should be a bulwark against ill-advised or sinister attempts by Congress or the executive to encroach on individual liberties; and that the purpose of a constitution is to place structural protections and rights beyond the outcome of any election. James Madison reminds us, "It is proper to take alarm at the first experiment with our liberties."

With an eye to history and recent experience, the founding fathers are as superior to Posner and Vermuele in political science as Copernicus was to Ptolemy in astronomy.

Contrary to the fantasies of the two academics, the chief executive regularly contrives emergencies and inflates national-security dangers to expand his authorities and excite popular support. As California Sen. Johnson quipped, "truth is the first casualty of war." Judges should not defer to predictable prevarications, exaggerations, or distortions by the White House. While the jurist may be isolated from the concerns of war and international affairs, his decisions will not be systematically warped by personal political agendas. Judges may err, but the ramifications will be limited and short-lived. Even constitutional decisions can be overruled by constitutional amendments, as was done with the Federal Income Tax Amendment on the eve of World War I. Moreover, Posner and Vermuele do not sally forth with a single non-frivolous hypothetical or historical example in which a nondeferential Supreme Court ruling might actually handicap the president's ability to defeat global terrorists or comparable menaces.

The Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798 were born of imaginary fright over

France and potential alien treachery concocted by Federalist stalwarts. No alien was deported under the new laws. The Sedition Act targeted political speech critical of John Adams's administration, with a telling exception for assailing Republican Vice President Thomas Jefferson (a political rival of the Federalist president). The Act also lapsed in 1801, when Napoleon was emerging as an external threat, proving that it had little importance in terms of actual foreign policy. Federal judges should not have deferred to a myth of a great emergency in their approval of the constitutionality of the Sedition Act. They should have recognized the suppression of speech as the flagrant violation of the First Amendment that it was and insisted that any emergency must be defined by more than a presidential encyclical.

World War I yielded the Espionage Act, another Sedition Act, criminal punishment of antiwar expression (including the imprisonment of Eugene Debs), the A. Mitchell Palmer raids, and the Red Scare. But the United States was never threatened with invasion or rebellion: draft riots were an illusion; the danger from Bolshevism or the IWW was logarithmically exaggerated by Congress and President Woodrow Wilson; and not a crumb of evidence suggested then or now that the extraordinary powers asserted by the government during the Great War and its aftermath strengthened national security. They were enacted to silence critics and generate an appearance of national peril that causes the public to rally behind the president and indulge infringement on liberties. The Supreme Court should have resisted prosecution anyone under these pro-war laws.

During World War II, President Franklin Roosevelt contrived suspicions of disloyalty among 120,000 Japanese Americans and permanent resident aliens to justify their internment in detention camps. FDR acted to placate widespread racism on the West Coast, not to protect the nation from treason. Gen. John DeWitt, who had been dispatched by FDR to the West Coast to assess the loyalty of Japanese Ameri-

cans, concluded, in the manner of the Queen of Hearts in *Alice in Wonderland*, that the Japanese must be plotting treason because he was unable to unearth an iota of evidence of guilt. During the five months that elapsed between Pearl Harbor and the internments, no Japanese American was even accused of sabotage or espionage. Many Japanese American internees volunteered for the Armed Forces, where they became highly decorated airmen flying missions over Italy. FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover opposed the internments, and in 1944 FDR was informed by all his military and intelligence officials that ending the internments would not endanger national security. The president, nevertheless, continued the camps until early 1945.

Posner and Vermuele dispute this grim history with a signature fairy tale about a generally benign executive. The two maintain that Roosevelt was not a racist, and thus, it is improbable that he would issue a racist internment order. But FDR was complacent with segregation in the Armed Forces in both World Wars and recognized that racism paid handsome political dividends throughout his career.

The two professors assert that FDR's Attorney General Francis Biddle ascribed the internment decision to the president's belief that "What must be done to defend the country must be done." But the professors neglect to reveal that Biddle himself opposed the order. I recently spoke at Ford's Theatre in Washington, D.C. about the matter, and in attendance was Biddle's grandson, who voiced shame over his ancestor's capitulation to political expediency. He revealed that the former attorney general was haunted by his moral squalidness much like Lady Macbeth and her "damned spot."

I have dilated on the Japanese American internment to highlight the fatally erroneous assumption of Posner and Vermuele that in emergency circumstances the president will not succumb to base motives or lie and deceive to secure a political advantage or retaliate against

enemies and scapegoats. If the assumption of the professors were true, judicial deference might be justified because judges are generally unschooled in international affairs. But historically, presidents have fabricated and manipulated emergencies to advance nefarious, petty, or mean-spirited objectives as a matter of course.

FDR lied about Nazi submarine attacks on United States naval vessels to awaken popular support for entry into World War II. President Harry Truman lied about the national-security implications of a steel strike to justify the government's seizure of a steel mill during the Korean War. When the Supreme Court rebuked the seizure in *Youngstown Sheet & Tube Co. v. Sawyer* (1952), nothing worrisome ensued. President Lyndon Johnson lied about a North Vietnamese attack on the *Turner Joy* to generate support for the Tonkin Gulf Resolution. President Richard M. Nixon greatly exaggerated the national-security dangers of the publication of the Pentagon Papers and tracing of the money used to pay the Watergate burglars in a vain attempt to obstruct justice. In *New York Times v. United States* (1971), the Supreme Court permitted the publication of the Pentagon Papers, and the nation suffered no harm. Sept. 11 is another chapter in the annals of executive deceit employed to manufacture emergencies. President Bush's responses to the inflated danger should elicit no judicial deference.

President Bush, Vice President Richard Cheney, and Cabinet officers have preposterously preached that the threat of al-Qaeda is indistinguishable from that of Hitler, Stalin, Hirohito, or the Soviet Union during the Cold War. The White House soundtrack is that global terrorism threatens the imminent destruction of Western civilization, as if repeat of the Alaric's sack of Rome in AD 410. were at hand. President Bush further insists that war is afoot whenever a terrorist anywhere in the world threatens an American with harm. In other words, the president will be able to use the threat of terrorism as justification for any nonconstitutional action in the indefinite future.

Notwithstanding the propaganda, the clash with global terrorism is not "war" by any reasonable definition of the term. Al-Qaeda sports no Red Army equivalent, no arsenal of nuclear weapons and delivery vehicles, no team of first-rate scientists to develop new weapons systems, no economy or national resources capable of supporting full-scale conflict. Moreover, 9/11 did not threaten the United States' sovereignty or republican form of government. On 9/11, terrorists murdered 3,000, but there have been no additional terrorist-related casualties in the United States for more than five years. Americans today do not feel at war as they did in World War II or even during the Cold War with its crises over Cuba and Berlin. Meanwhile, there have been approximately 100,000 domestic murders during the past five years without any suggestion that the nation is at war with would-be murderers justifying the employment of emergency powers that shortchange due process.

Federal courts should not defer, as Posner and Vermeule urge, to President Bush's pronouncement that 9/11 propelled the nation into a perpetual "war" with international terrorism. Nor should they defer to his corresponding assertions of emergency powers: the National Security Agency's warrantless electronic surveillance program targeting American citizens on American soil in contravention of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978; an open-ended definition of unlawful enemy combatant to include persons who would sew Osama a pair of britches; Combatant Status Review Tribunals denuded of due process to determine whether Guantanamo Bay detainees are genuine terrorists; the invocation of the State Secrets Privilege to dismiss suits alleging violations of constitutional rights; or the assertion of executive privilege to deny Congress information necessary for oversight of intelligence collection programs.

Contrary to Posner and Vermeule, eagle-eyed judicial review of presidential action during professed emergencies should cause no one alarm. Take

President Bush's executive order establishing military commissions to try aliens for alleged war crimes in the days after 9/11. Military commissions were said to be instrumental to the defeat of global terrorism, yet not a single trial has been held as of this writing. No one has noticed the dormancy because the commissions are irrelevant to the conflict. And yet even if no trial is ever held, the accused could still be detained indefinitely at Guantanamo Bay.

The Supreme Court overturned Mr. Bush's executive order in *Hamdan v. Rumsfeld* (2006), giving none of the deference to the commander in chief that Posner and Vermeule salute. The nation suffered not a whit of danger from the lack of military commissions trying alleged war crimes. President Bush and a Republican-controlled Congress, however, resurrected the commissions in the Military Commissions Act of 2006 to create an appearance of being "tough on terrorism" for the November 2006 elections. No evidence was presented that the trial of war crimes in civilian courts or by courts martial in lieu of military commissions would be impracticable or unreliable. When the Supreme Court reviews the constitutionality of the MCA, why should any deference be paid to a partisan political judgment of the president dressed in the counterfeit clothes of national security? Even if the Court ruled against military commissions except in areas of active hostilities where immediate adjudication was necessary to preserve fresh evidence and to prevent chaos, national security would be undisturbed.

The life of enlightened law is not intellectual tidiness or cleverness but experience. Experience teaches that the optimal balance between freedom and security is obtained by judges skeptical of national-security justifications advanced to curtail liberty or clip due process. ■

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The Lovely Lady Buckley



The first time I met Pat Buckley was in 1964, and the circumstances were rather strange. It was at the Palace Hotel in Gstaad, and a few friends and

I were drinking around the large piano in the grill while the pianist was playing a spirited version of Mussolini's favorite tune, "Giovinezza." Our singing the ode to youth and fascism apparently did not best please a tall bald man standing at the bar, who suddenly threw his whiskey glass at us. It smashed against the wall showering us with glass, although no one was cut or seriously hurt.

Under normal circumstances, a fight would have ensued, but there was a problem. The tall baldie had his arm in a cast, and an even taller lady was giving him hell for having thrown the projectile.

So as five rowdies surrounded the couple demanding an apology—it was not given—the lady turned to me, the obvious ringleader and Mussolini fan, and in an upper-class accent asked me to dinner "at the chateau, tomorrow evening, and don't be late..." This did have a calming effect, and we soon dispersed. At the time I had heard of Bill Buckley but had never met him or even read *National Review*. (I was living in Europe at the time.)

I was intrigued and very curious to meet the Buckleys, so the next evening I drove to nearby Rougemont, where the 16th-century Chateau de Rougemont was rented by the Buckleys every winter for close to 35 years. I was not to be disappointed.

The glass thrower turned out to be Alistair Horne, the historian and a man who was to become a very close friend. Ken Galbraith was also present, and upon hearing the circumstances of how Horne, Pat, and I had met, immediately lectured me against the theory that anyone who can make the trains run on

time in the land of pasta must be a very good man. There was also Dimitri Nabokov, son of Vladimir, David Niven and his wife, and Bill Buckley's sister Patricia. Pat seated me on her right, as I was a first-time guest, a *noblesse-oblige* gesture that did not go unnoticed. As Rick told Captain Renault, it was the start of a beautiful friendship that ended early Sunday morning, April 15, 2007.

Pat Buckley's numerous obituaries have mentioned her charitable and social activities—which were awesome, to say the least—and also how she always described herself as a mother

bedroom door, a bucket that would tilt the moment the door was opened. The reason for this was that I had yet again got into a poker game in Gstaad and had gone missing for couple of days. Pat and Bill were going to a gala dinner that night, and Pat, worried about my long absence, went to my room to leave me a note. Drenched and her dress ruined, she sat on my bed and roared with laughter, thinking it was I who had set the trap. That's the kind of person she was. She always saw the funny side first.

When I started writing for *National Review* she prevented me from going to Albania because she thought it too dangerous. When I protested to Bill, he shook his head and said, "Well, you know how Patsy is once she gets something into her head. 'You cost me a

THE LADY TURNED TO ME, THE **OBVIOUS RINGLEADER AND MUSSOLINI FAN**, AND IN AN **UPPER-CLASS ACCENT** ASKED ME TO DINNER.

and housewife, first and foremost. Obituaries by nature have to stick to facts, and because of the dryness of facts, at times the real person does not emerge.

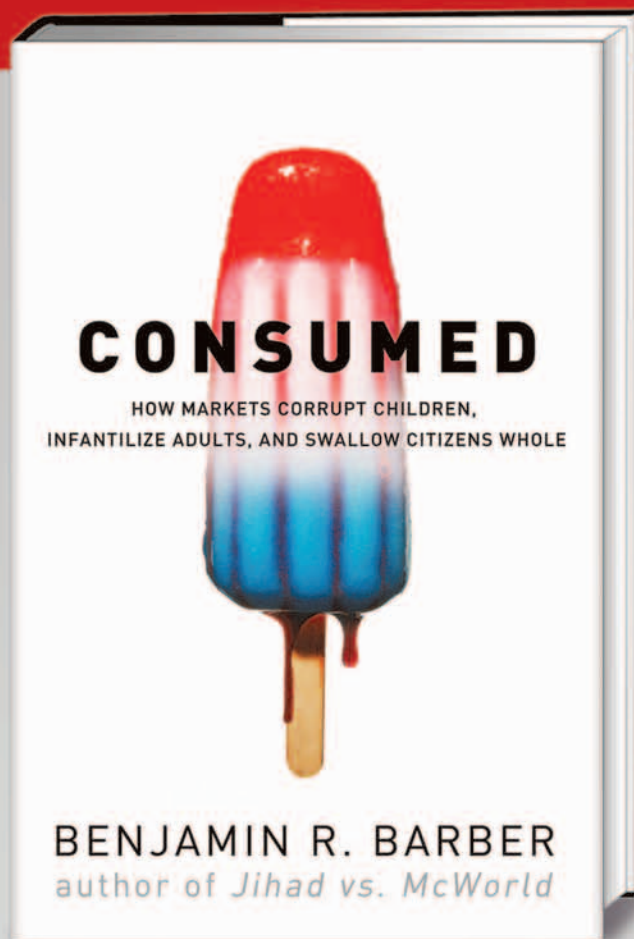
What always came to mind first about Pat was her incredible sense of humor. She looked and acted like Kay Kendall, the English madcap actress of the late '50s, pretending to take umbrage at my dirty jokes and screaming at the top of her lungs whenever I brought some floozy to her house. "You are not welcome here unless my darling Alexandra is with you," she would shout, and then wink at me and tell me to sit down.

One year, 1970 I believe, I had lost all my money gambling and was staying at the chateau after Pat took pity on my reduced circumstances. Christopher Buckley, back then a 14-year-old, had attached a large bucket of water over my

Pulitzer Prize," I complained to Pat, but it was nothing doing. "I don't care what I cost you, you are not going to that horrid place."

And so it went throughout the years. One summer on board my boat, Pat took one look at the Spartan surroundings and in no time had the whole thing outfitted with modern comforts. Two years ago, she came on my new boat, sweetly complimented me and told me how she missed the old sailer and the incredible discomforts sailing her entailed.

She lived in great pain for most of her life, but I never heard her complain once. In this day and age where everyone feels a victim, Pat Buckley was a shining example of fortitude and courage and grace under pressure. My heart goes out to her husband of 56 years, who has lost a unique treasure. ■



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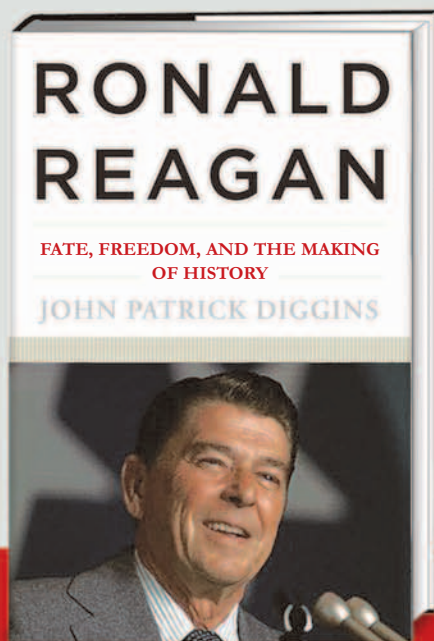
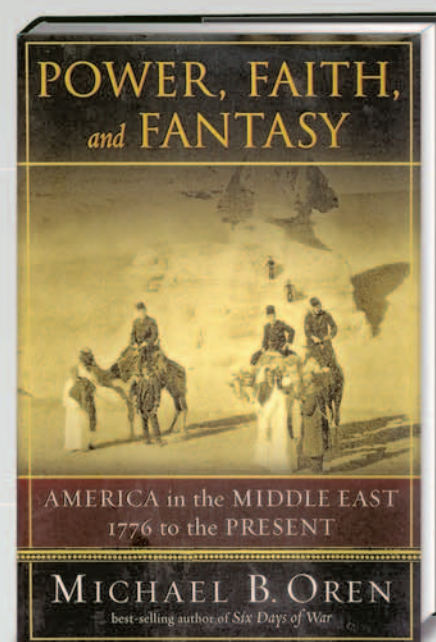
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